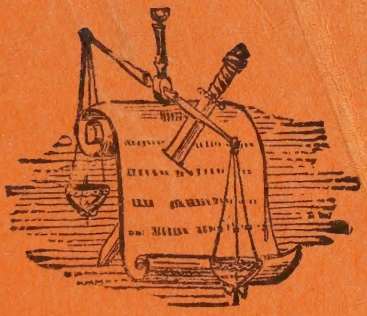

EDWIN BOOTH'S

PROMPT-BOOK OF

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE

EDITED BY

WILLIAM WINTER

THE PENN PLAY CO.

39 Lincoln St., Boston, Mass.

PRIZE WINNING PLAYS
1928 Contest

The Third Floor Front. *By* LIDA LARRIMORE. A Comedy in 3 Acts; 5 Males; 7 Females; Time, 2 Hours.
Nancy Wilks is in love with Jack Gordon who occupies the third floor front. Mrs. Wilks, who runs the boarding house and Mr. Wilks, has no use for Jack. Jack gives Nancy a string of pearls for a birthday present. Mrs. Wilks notices Nancy's pearls, and Jack is declared a crook because a pearl necklace has just been stolen from Celia Langdon, a society girl. The necklace, however, is not Miss Langdon's and Jack turns out to be the son of the wealthiest people in town. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

Horseshoe Luck. *By* RALPH E. DYAR. A Comedy in 3 Acts; 7 Males; 4 Females; Time, 2½ Hours.
Lib Ingham of Maine takes his race horse "Dretful Snug" to Florida, where he makes his home with Horace Everett. On the day that Lib arrives, Everett leaves and is lost at sea. Ingham manages Everett's affairs, his problem being complicated by the extravagance of Everett's two daughters. On the day that Dretful Snug wins the Coral Gables handicap, Everett returns home. As a result of selling oil stock, he is charged with using the mails to defraud. Lib is persuaded by May to go ahead with the oil project, and to finance it he sells Dretful Snug for $100,000. The oil wells, however, prove successful and May promises to become Lib's wife. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

References. *By* EDNA B. LONGNECKER. A Comedy Drama in 3 Acts; 3 Males; 7 Females; Time, 2½ Hours.
Betty Fenton, who has always known luxury has no sympathy for one less fortunate. She misses a string of pearls and accuses Marie, her new maid of the theft. Bob, Betty's husband, rebukes her and tells her that she needs to suffer and know the privations of Marie's kind before she can understand the view point of the less fortunate. Unknown to him she secures a position as maid in a wealthy family and is treated in much the same way as she treated her servants. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

It Runs In The Family. *By* JAMES H. PARKE. A Mystery Comedy in 3 Acts; 5 Males; 3 Females; Time, 2½ Hours.
Ann and Bill and Mom and Pop Saunders have their eyes on a large diamond which reposes in a safe at the Bingham country estate. Pop, after much difficulty, manages to get the diamond from the safe. Ann, by a ruse, steals it from him. Bill sees her hide it and takes it from its hiding place. He in turn hides it. Mr. and Mrs. Bingham return. Everybody endeavors to keep them from opening the safe. The gem is finally returned to the safe, Mrs. Bingham not knowing it had been taken. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

Where's Peter? *By* EMILIE LORING. A Comedy in 3 Acts; 6 Males; 5 Females; Time, 2½ Hours.
When Dr. Peter Maxwell engaged Cynthia Brooks as his secretary he also engaged a mystery. There were two headlines in the paper that might be clues.
MYSTERIOUS DISAPPEARANCE OF BEAUTIFUL AMERICAN GIRL.
PRETTY SECRETARY SUSPECTED OF STEALING IMPORTANT PAPERS.
Peter finds out she is the secretary. Cynthia had gone to her grandfather to try for a general reconciliation. He had given her valuable bonds to present to her father and had urged secrecy as his wife would stop her if she found out. Peter helps Cynthia complete her mission, and in doing so they both realize they should continue partners for life. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

Property of D. G. Smullin—South San Francisco High School
South San Francisco, California

The Prompt-Book

Edited by William Winter

Shakespeare's Comedy

Of

The Merchant of Venice

As Presented by

Edwin Booth

"*A stage, where every man must play a part,*
And mine a sad one."

"*If I can catch him once upon the hip,*
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him."

"*A kinder gentleman treads not the earth.*"

"*I will have the heart of him if he forfeit.*"

"*Never did I know*
A creature that did bear the shape of man
So keen and greedy to confound a man."

"*We do pray for mercy,*
And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy."

"*You take my life,*
When you do take the means whereby I live. . . .
I pray you give me leave to go from hence."

Philadelphia

The Penn Publishing Company

1923

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Diane Ashley

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By William Winter.

Preface.

✠

"THE *Merchant of Venice*" *is mentioned by Meres* [*1598*], *and it was first published in 1600. The sources to which it is thought that Shakespeare resorted for the main incidents of its plot are: a collection of tales called "Il Pecorone," written by Ser Giovanni, a notary of Florence, about 1378, and first published in 1558, at Milan; and the popular collection of stories called the "Gesta Romanorum." The ballad of Gernutus, which embodies the incident of the bond,—and which may be found in Percy's "Reliques," and in several modern collections of old poetry,—was also, probably, extant in Shakespeare's day, and known to him. It is conjectured, too, that an earlier play, mentioned by Stephen Gosson* [*1579*] *as "shewn at the Bull," and as "representing the greedyness of worldly choosers, and the bloody minds of usurers," may have dealt with some of the old materials which served Shakespeare for his comedy. The savage, relentless Jew is one of the most ancient persons of fiction. "The story of the caskets," says Dowden, "is first found in the mediæval Greek romance of 'Barlaam and Josaphat,' by Joannes Damascènus (about 800); in another form it is told by the English poet Gower, and the Italian novelist Boccaccio.' These matters are solely or chiefly interesting as tending to direct study upon the wonderful genius with which Shakespeare transfigured all that he touched. His originality is not that of the maker of themes and bald facts, but that of*

the shaper and interpreter. "In the management of the plot," says Hallam, "which is sufficiently complex without the slightest confusion or incoherence, I do not conceive that it has been surpassed in the annals of any theatre." "The union of the two actions in one event," says Dr. Johnson, "is, in this drama, eminently happy. Dryden was much pleased with his own address in connecting the two plots of his 'Spanish Friar,' which yet, I believe, the critic will find excelled by this play."

The supremacy of Shakespeare as the poet of nature is conspicuously seen in any comparison between "The Merchant of Venice" and its popular predecessor on the old London stage, "The Rich Jew of Malta," by Christopher Marlowe [1594]. The Jew in Marlowe's piece, a thoroughly diabolical character, was acted by Alleyne, the founder of Dulwich College — still standing, with his tomb in the middle of its hall of paintings — on the Surrey side of the Thames. An alteration of "The Merchant of Venice," made by Lord Lansdowne, and first acted at Lincoln's Inn Fields, was published in 1701; and this held the stage till 1741, when Macklin effected his restoration of Shylock. Lord Lansdowne's piece begins with a prologue, in which the ghosts of Shakespeare and Dryden rise, crowned with laurel; and its second act contains a musical masque, called Peleus and Thetis. A banquet scene is also introduced, in which the Jew, seated at a separate table, drinks to his Money as his Only Mistress. Shylock, which in that version was acted by Thomas Doggett [——, 1721], was made a comic character, and wore a red wig. Macklin's great performance reinstated the part as one of tragical conception, and had the effect of banishing Lansdowne's distortion forever from the stage. John Philip Kemble made an acting copy of "The Merchant of Venice," in 1795. The original representative of Shylock was Burbage —

who dressed it with a red wig and a false nose. Shylock has been greatly acted by Henderson, George Frederick Cooke, Edmund Kean, and Junius Brutus Booth. Of Kean in Shylock — in which part, at Drury Lane, he made his first great hit [January 26th, 1814], Douglas Jerrold used to say that he impressed his audience "like a chapter of Genesis." "The elder Booth's Shylock," says Gould, "was the representative Hebrew," "a type of the religion of the law," and instinct with "the might of a people whom neither time, nor scorn, nor political oppression could subdue." Bogumil Dawison, on the German stage, was famous as the Jew; and the Shylock of James W. Wallack, likewise, is memorable among the most affecting personations that have graced the stage in this century.

W. W.

New York, October 30th, 1878.

Note.

As originally published, in 1878, Edwin Booth's Prompt-Book of "The Merchant of Venice" comprised only four acts of Shakespeare's comedy, and it ended with Shylock's exit after the Trial, the last line spoken being Gratiano's "To bring thee to the gallows, not the font." In 1887, however, after forming his professional alliance with Lawrence Barrett, he amended his Prompt-Book of this play by restoring the conclusion of the fourth act and the whole of the fifth. My Preface to the original book contained this paragraph:

To the reverential student of Shakespeare this version

of 'The Merchant of Venice' will seem little better than a mutilation. While, however, much has been omitted, nothing has been introduced. If the piece does not go as far as might be desired, it is, at least, faithful to Shakespeare, as far as it goes. The object sought has been the construction of an acting copy, suitable for the use of leading tragedians, in which the position of chief prominence is assigned to the character of Shylock. 'The Merchant of Venice'—aside from some aspects of the treatment of the Jew—is pure comedy; and, when given entire, it should be acted by a company of excellent comedians. The part of Shylock would naturally fall to the 'character' actor in such a company; but it would not largely overshadow its companion parts—supposing every portion of the piece to receive competent and careful treatment. When, on the other hand, this play is acted chiefly for the purpose of illustrating Shylock, a judicious compression of the scenes is found not only expedient but highly desirable. Such a compression—with this view and for this reason—has been attempted here. It will be found, though, that the story, while told with brevity, has not been impaired in substance. The incidents of the bond and the caskets are duly displayed, and the poet's great skill in combining them is suitably exhibited. This version is in four acts, and it can be represented in two hours and a quarter.

W. W.

"*She was a form of life and light*
That seen became a part of sight,
And rose, where'er I turned mine eye,
The morning-star of memory."—BYRON.

"*Sweet pain of love, bind thou with fetters fleet*
The heart that on the dew of hope must pine."—GOETHE.

"*O happy hour! and happier hours*
Await them. Many a merry face
Salutes them,—maidens of the place,
That pelt us in the porch with flowers."—TENNYSON.

"*Wilt thou go on with me?*
The moon is bright, the sea is calm,
And I know well the ocean paths. * * *
Thou wilt go on with me?"—SOUTHEY.

"*The hunted fox, the tortured wild-cat, loves its young—the despised and persecuted race of Abraham love their children.* * * * *When the day comes, and I ask my own, then what hear I but damned Jew, and the curse of Egypt on your tribe.*"—SCOTT.

"*He hath his armour on—*
I am his sword, shield, helm; I but enclose
Myself, and my own heart, and heart's blood, when
I thus encompass him * * *
Each for the other thus,
And in that other for his dearer self."
BANIM—IN "DAMON AND PYTHIAS."

"*And at the last ten thousand crowns*
They offered him to save:
Gernutus said, 'I will no gold,
My forfeit I will have.'"
THE BALLAD OF GERNUTUS.

"*Gentle deed*
Makes gentle bleid."
OLD SCOTTISH PROVERB.

"*Anguish is come upon me, because my life is yet whole in me.* * * *I was sure that he could not live, after that he was fallen.*"—II SAMUEL, *i*, 9, 10.

Persons Represented.

DUKE OF VENICE.
ANTONIO, *the Merchant of Venice, Friend to Bassanio.*
BASSANIO, *Friend to Antonio.*

GRATIANO,
LORENZO,
SALARINO,
SOLANIO,
SALERIO,
} *Venetian Gentlemen, Friends to Antonio and Bassanio.*

SHYLOCK, *a Jew.*
TUBAL, *a Jew, Friend to Shylock.*
LAUNCELOT GOBBO, *Servant to Shylock.*
OLD GOBBO, *Father to Launcelot.*
LEONARDO, *Servant to Bassanio.*
BALTHAZAR, *Servant to Portia.*
PORTIA, *a rich Heiress.*
NERISSA, *her Friend and Companion.*
JESSICA, *Daughter to Shylock.*
MAGNIFICOES OF VENICE, OFFICERS OF THE COURT OF JUSTICE, LORDS, LADIES *and* ATTENDANTS.

Place and Time.

SCENE.—*Partly in Venice, and partly at Portia's villa, named Belmont, on the adjacent main-land.*
PERIOD.—*The Sixteenth Century.*
TIME OF ACTION.—*A little more than three months.*

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

Act First.

Scene First.—VENICE. A STREET.

[*Enter Antonio, Salarino, and Solanio.*

Ant.

In sooth, I know not why I am so sad:
It wearies me; you say it wearies you:
But how I caught it, found it, or came by it,
What stuff 't is made of, whereof it is born,
I am to learn;
And such a want-wit sadness makes of me,
That I have much ado to know myself.

Salarino.

Your mind is tossing on the ocean;
There, where your argosies with portly sail
Do overpeer the petty traffickers,
That curt'sy to them, do them reverence,
As they fly by them with their woven wings.

Solanio.

Believe me, sir, had I such venture forth,
The better part of my affections would

Be with my hopes abroad. I should be still
Plucking the grass to know where sits the wind;
Peering into maps for ports, and piers, and roads;
And every object that might make me fear
Misfortune to my ventures, out of doubt,
Would make sad.

Salarino.

My wind, cooling my broth,
Would blow me to an ague when I thought
What harm a wind too great might do at sea.
I should not see the sandy hour-glass run
But I should think of shallows and of flats,
And see her wealthy Andrew docked in sand.
Veiling her high top lower than her ribs,
To kiss her burial.
Shall I have the thought
To think on this? and shall I lack the thought,
That such a thing, bechanced, would make me sad?
But tell not me; I know Antonio
Is sad to think upon his merchandise.

Ant.

Believe me, no: I thank my fortune for it,
My ventures are not in one bottom trusted,
Nor to one place; nor is my whole estate
Upon the fortune of this present year:
Therefore my merchandise makes me not sad.

Salarino.

Why, then you are in love.

Ant.

Fie, fie!

Salarino.

Not in love neither? Then let us say, you are sad
Because you are not merry. And 't were as easy
For you to laugh, and leap, and say you are merry
Because you are not sad. Now, by two-headed Janus,
Nature hath framed strange fellows in her time:
Some that will evermore peep through their eyes,
And laugh like parrots at a bagpiper;
And others of such vinegar aspect,
That they 'll not show their teeth in way of smile,
Though Nestor swear the jest be laughable.

Solanio.

Here comes Bassanio, your most noble kinsman,
Gratiano, and Lorenzo. Fare you well;
We leave you now with better company.

Salarino.

I would have stayed till I had made you merry, [*Crosses*
If worthier friends had not prevented me.

Ant.

Your worth is very dear in my regard.
I take it your own business calls on you,
And you embrace th' occasion to depart.

[*Enter Bassanio, Lorenzo, and Gratiano* L. 3 E.

Salarino. [*To them.*

Good-morrow, my good lords.

Bass.

Good signiors both, when shall we laugh? Say, when?
You grow exceeding strange: Must it be so?

Salarino.

We'll make our leisures to attend on yours.
[*Exeunt Salarino and Solanio* R. 1. E.

Lor.

My lord Bassanio, since you have found Antonio,
We two will leave you; but at dinner-time
I pray you have in mind where we must meet.

Bass.

I will not fail you.

Gra.

You look not well, signior Antonio;
You have too much respect upon the world:
They lose it that do buy it with much care.
Believe me, you are marvellously changed.

Ant.

I hold the world but as the world, Gratiano;
A stage, where every man must play a part,
And mine a sad one.

Gra.

Let me play the Fool:
With mirth and laughter let old wrinkles come;
And let my liver rather heat with wine
Than my heart cool with mortifying groans.
Why should a man whose blood is warm within
Sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?
Sleep when he wakes, and creep into the jaundice
By being peevish? I tell thee what, Antonio,—
I love thee, and it is my love that speaks,—
There are a sort of men, whose visages
Do cream and mantle like a standing pond;
And do a wilful stillness entertain,
With purpose to be dressed in an opinion
Of wisdom, gravity, profound conceit:
As who should say, "I am Sir Oracle,
And when I ope my lips, let no dog bark!"

O, my Antonio, I do know of these,
That therefore only are reputed wise
For saying nothing; when, I am very sure,
If they should speak, would almost damn those ears,
Which, hearing them, would call their brothers fools.
I 'll tell thee more of this another time:
But fish not with this melancholy bait,
For this fool-gudgeon, this opinion.
Come, good Lorenzo: — Fare ye well a while;
I 'll end my exhortation after dinner.

Lor.

Well, we will leave you, then, till dinner-time:
I must be one of these same dumb wise men,
For Gratiano never lets me speak.

Gra.

Well, keep me company but two years more,
Thou shalt not know the sound of thine own tongue.

Ant.

Farewell: I 'll grow a talker for this gear.

Gra.

Thanks, i' faith; for silence is only commendable
In a neat's tongue dried, and a maid not vendible.
[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo* R.

Ant.

Is that any thing now?

Bass.

Gratiano speaks an infinite deal of nothing, more than any man in all Venice. His reasons are as two grains of wheat hid in two bushels of chaff; you shall seek all day ere you find them, and when you have them, they are not worth the search.

Ant.

Well, tell me now, what lady is the same
To whom you swore a secret pilgrimage,
That you to-day promised to tell me of?

Bass.

'T is not unknown to you, Antonio,
How much I have disabled mine estate,
By something showing a more swelling port
Than my faint means would grant continuance:
Nor do I now make moan to be abridged
From such a noble rate; but my chief care
Is to come fairly off from the great debts
Wherein my time, something too prodigal,
Hath left me gaged. To you, Antonio,
I owe the most in money and in love;
And from your love I have a warranty
To unburthen all my plots and purposes,
How to get clear of all the debts I owe.

Ant.

I pray you, good Bassanio, let me know it;
And, if it stand, as you yourself still do,
Within the eye of honour, be assured
My purse, my person, my extremest means,
Lie all unlocked to your occasions.

Bass.

In my school-days, when I had lost one shaft,
I shot his fellow of the self-same flight
The self-same way, with more advisèd watch
To find the other forth; and, by adventuring both,
I oft found both: I urge this childhood proof,
Because what follows is pure innocence.
I owe you much; and, like a wilful youth,
That which I owe is lost: but if you please
To shoot another arrow that self-way
Which you did shoot the first, I do not doubt,
As I will watch the aim, or to find both,
Or bring your latter hazard back again,
And thankfully rest debtor for the first.

Ant.

You know me well, and herein spend but time,
To wind about my love with circumstance;

And, out of doubt, you do me now more wrong
In making question of my uttermost,
Than if you had made waste of all I have.
Then do but say to me what I should do,
That in your knowledge may by me be done,
And I am prest unto it: therefore speak.

Bass.

In Belmont is a lady richly left,
And she is fair, and, fairer than that word,
Of wond'rous virtues. Sometimes from her eyes
I did receive fair speechless messages:
Her name is Portia; nothing undervalued
To Cato's daughter, Brutus' Portia.
Nor is the wide world ignorant of her worth;
For the four winds blow in from every coast
Renownèd suitors.
O, my Antonio! had I but the means
To hold a rival place with one of them,
I have a mind presages me such thrift,
That I should questionless be fortunate.

Ant.

Thou know'st that all my fortunes are at sea;
Neither have I money, nor commodity
To raise a present sum: therefore, go forth;
Try what my credit can in Venice do;
That shall be racked, even to the uttermost,
To furnish thee to Belmont, to fair Portia.
Go, presently inquire, and so will I,
Where money is; and I no question make,
To have it of my trust, or for my sake.

[*Exeunt, Antonio* L., *and Bassanio* R.

Scene Second.—BELMONT. A ROOM IN PORTIA'S HOUSE.

[*Enter Portia and Nerissa.*

Por.

By my troth, Nerissa, my little body is a-weary of this great world.

Ner.

You would be, sweet madam, if your miseries were in the same abundance as your good fortunes are. And yet, for aught I see, they are as sick that surfeit with too much, as they that starve with nothing. It is no small happiness, therefore, to be seated in the mean; superfluity comes sooner by white hairs, but competency lives longer.

Por.

Good sentences, and well pronounced.

Ner.

They would be better, if well followed.

Por.

If to do were as easy as to know what were good to do, chapels had been churches, and poor men's cottages princes' palaces. It is a good divine that follows his own instructions. I can easier teach twenty what were good to be done, than be one of the twenty to follow mine own teaching. But this reasoning is not in the fashion to choose me a husband:—O me, the word choose! I may neither choose whom I would, nor refuse whom I dislike; so is the will of a living daughter curbed by the will of a dead father. Is it not hard, Nerissa, that I cannot choose one, nor refuse none?

Ner.

Your father was ever virtuous; and holy men at their death have good inspirations; therefore, the lottery that he hath devised in these three chests, of gold, silver, and lead (whereof who chooses his meaning, chooses you), will, no doubt, never be chosen by any rightly, but one who you shall rightly love. But what warmth is there in your affection towards any of these princely suitors that are already come?

Por.

I pray thee, overname them; and as thou namest them I will describe them; and according to my description level at my affection.

Ner.

First, there is the Neapolitan prince.

Por.

Ay, that's a colt, indeed, for he doth nothing but talk of his horse; and he makes it a great appropriation to his own good parts that he can shoe him himself. I am much afraid my lady his mother played false with a smith.

Ner.

Then, is there the County Palatine.

Por.

He doth nothing but frown; as who should say, "An you will not have me, choose." He hears merry tales, and smiles not: I fear he will prove the weeping philosopher when he grows old, being so full of unmannerly sadness in his youth. I had rather be married to a death's head with a bone in his mouth than to either of these. Heaven defend me from these two!

Ner.

How say you by the French lord, Monsieur le Bon?

Por.

Heaven made him, and therefore let him pass for a man.

Ner.

How like you the young German, the Duke of Saxony's nephew?

Por.

Very vilely in the morning, when he is sober; and most vilely in the afternoon, when he is drunk: when he is best he is a little worse than a man; and when he is worst he is little better than a beast. An the worst fall that ever fell, I hope I shall make shift to go without him.

Ner.

If he should offer to choose, and choose the right casket, you should refuse to perform your father's will, if you should refuse to accept him.

Por.

Therefore, for fear of the worst, I pray thee set a deep glass of Rhenish wine on the contrary casket: for, if the devil be within, and that temptation without, I know he will choose it.

Ner.

You need not fear, lady, the having any of these lords; they have acquainted me with their determinations: which is, indeed, to return to their home, and to trouble you with no more suit; unless you may be won by some other sort than your father's imposition, depending on the caskets.

Por.

If I live to be as old as Sibylla I will die as chaste as Diana, unless I be obtained by the manner of my father's will. I am glad this parcel of wooers are so reasonable; for there is not one among them but I dote on his very absence, and I wish them a fair departure.

Ner.

Do you not remember, lady, in your father's time, a Venetian, a scholar, and a soldier, that came hither in company of the Marquis of Montferrat?

Por.

Yes, yes; it was Bassanio; as I think, so was he called.

Ner.

True, madam; he, of all the men that ever my foolish eyes looked upon, was the best deserving a fair lady.

Por.

I remember him well; and I remember him worthy of thy praise.

[*Enter Balthazar* L. 1. E.

How now? what news? [*To him.*

Bal.

The four strangers seek you, madam, to take their leave; and there is a forerunner come from a fifth, the Prince of Morocco; who brings word the prince, his master, will be here to-night.

Por.

If I could bid the fifth welcome with so good heart as I can bid the other four farewell, I should be glad of his approach: if he have the condition of a saint, and the complexion of a devil, I had rather he should shrive me than wive me.

Come, Nerissa. Sirrah, go before. [*To Balthazar.*

Whiles we shut the gate upon one wooer, another knocks at the door. [*Exeunt* L. 1. E.

Scene Third.—Venice. A Street.

[*Enter Bassanio and Shylock* R. U. E.

Shy.

Three thousand ducats,—well.

Bass.

Ay, sir, for three months.

Shy.

For three months,—well.

Bass.

For the which, as I told you, Antonio shall be bound.

Shy.

Antonio shall become bound,—well.

Bass.

May you stead me? Will you pleasure me? Shall I know your answer?

Shy.

Three thousand ducats, for three months, and Antonio bound.

Bass.

Your answer to that.

Shy.

Antonio is a good man.

Bass.

Have you heard any imputation to the contrary?

Shy.

O no, no, no, no;—my meaning in saying he is a good man is, to have you understand me that he is sufficient: yet his means are in supposition: he hath an argosy bound to Tripolis, another to the Indies; I understand, moreover, upon the Rialto, he hath a third at Mexico, a fourth for England; and other ventures he hath, squandered abroad. But ships are but boards, sailors but men: there be land-rats and water-rats, water-thieves and land-thieves; I mean, pirates; and then, there is the peril of waters, winds, and rocks: the man is, notwithstanding, sufficient;—three thousand ducats;—I think I may take his bond.

Bass.

Be assured you may.

Shy.

I will be assured I may; and that I may be assured, I will bethink me. May I speak with Antonio?

Bass.

If it please you to dine with us.

Shy.

Yes, to smell pork! to eat of the habitation which your prophet, the Nazarite, conjured the devil into! I will buy with you, sell with you, talk with you, walk with you, and so following; but I will not eat with you, drink with you, nor pray with you.—What news on the Rialto?—Who is he comes here?

Bass.

This is signior Antonio. [*Exit Bassanio* L. I. E.

Shy.

How like a fawning publican he looks!
I hate him for he is a Christian:
But more, for that, in low simplicity,
He lends out money gratis, and brings down
The rate of usance here with us in Venice.
If I can catch him once upon the hip,
I will feed fat the ancient grudge I bear him.
He hates our sacred nation; and he rails,
Even there where merchants most do congregate,
On me, my bargains, and my well-won thrift,
Which he calls interest. Cursed be my tribe
If I forgive him!

[*Re-enter Bassanio with Antonio* L. I. E.

Bass.

Shylock, do you hear?

Shy.

I am debating of my present store:
And, by the near guess of my memory,
I cannot instantly raise up the gross
Of full three thousand ducats. What of that?
Tubal, a wealthy Hebrew of my tribe,
Will furnish me. But, soft; how many months
Do you desire?
Rest you fair, good signior: [*To Antonio.*
Your worship was the last man in our mouths

Ant.

Shylock, albeit I neither lend nor borrow,
By taking nor by giving of excess,
Yet, to supply the ripe wants of my friend,
I 'll break a custom: — Is he yet possessed
How much you would? [*To Bassanio.*

Shy.

Ay, ay, three thousand ducats.

Ant.

And for three months. [*To Shylock.*

Shy.

I had forgot, — three months; you told me so.
[*To Bassanio.*
Well then, your bond; and, let me see.
But hear you. [*To Antonio.*
Methought you said, you neither lend nor borrow
Upon advantage.

Ant.

I do never use it.

Shy.

When Jacob grazed his uncle Laban's sheep, —
This Jacob from our holy Abraham was
(As his wise mother wrought in his behalf)
The third possessor; ay, he was the third.

Ant.

And what of him? did he take interest?

Shy.

No, not take interest; not, as you would say,
Directly interest: mark what Jacob did.
When Laban and himself were compromised,
That all the eanlings which were streaked and pied
Should fall as Jacob's hire,
The skilful shepherd pilled me certain wands,
And, in the doing of the deed of kind,

He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who, then conceiving, did in eaning-time
Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.
This was a way to thrive, and he was blest;
And thrift is blessing, if men steal it not.

Ant.

This was a venture, sir, that Jacob served for;
A thing not in his power to bring to pass,
But swayed and fashioned by the hand of Heaven.
Was this inserted to make interest good?
Or is your gold and silver ewes and rams?

Shy.

I cannot tell; I make it breed as fast.

Ant.

Mark you this, Bassanio,
The devil can cite Scripture for his purpose.
An evil soul, producing holy witness,
Is like a villain with a smiling cheek;
A goodly apple rotten at the heart.
O, what a goodly outside falsehood hath!

Shy. [*Aside*

Three thousand ducats, — 't is a good round sum.
Three months from twelve, then let me see the rate.

Ant.

Well, Shylock, shall we be beholden to you?

Shy.

Signior Antonio, many a time, and oft
In the Rialto, you have rated me
About my monies, and my usances:
Still have I borne it with a patient shrug,
For suff'rance is the badge of all our tribe:
[*Showing his yellow cap.*

You call me "misbeliever," "cut-throat dog,"
And spet upon my Jewish gaberdine,
And all for use of that which is mine own.
Well, then, it now appears you need my help:
Go to, then; you come to me, and you say
"Shylock, we would have monies;" You say so
You, that did void your rheum upon my beard,
And foot me, as you spurn a stranger cur
Over your threshold; monies is your suit.
What should I say to you? Should I not say,
"Hath a dog money? is it possible
A cur can lend three thousand ducats?" or
Shall I bend low, and in a bondman's key,
With 'bated breath, and whispering humbleness,
Say this,—
"Fair sir, you spet on me on Wednesday last;
You spurned me such a day; another time
You called me dog; and for these courtesies
I 'll lend you thus much monies?"

Ant.

I am as like to call thee so again,
To spet on thee again, to spurn thee too.
If thou wilt lend this money, lend it not
As to thy friends; (for when did friendship take
A breed of barren metal of his friend?)
But lend it rather to thine enemy;
Who, if he break, thou may'st with better face
Exact the penalties.

Shy.

Why, look you, how you storm!
I would be friends with you, and have your love;
Forget the shames that you have stained me with;
Supply your present wants, and take no doit
Of usance for my monies, and you 'll not hear me:
This is kind I offer.

Ant.

This were kindness.

Shy.

This kindness will I show:
Go with me to a notary: seal me there
Your single bond; and, in a merry sport,
If you repay me not on such a day,
In such a place, such sum, or sums, as are
Expressed in the condition, let the forfeit
Be nominated for an equal pound
Of your fair flesh, to be cut off and taken
In what part of your body pleaseth me.

Ant.

Content, in faith; I 'll seal to such a bond,
And say there is much kindness in the Jew.

Bass. [*Coming down.*

You shall not seal to such a bond for me;
I 'll rather dwell in my necessity.

Ant.

Why, fear not, man; I will not forfeit it:
Within these two months, that 's a month before
This bond expires, I do expect return
Of thrice three times the value of this bond.

Shy.

O father Abraham! what these Christians are,
Whose own hard dealings teaches them suspect
The thoughts of others! Pray you, tell me this:
If he should break his day, what should I gain
By the exaction of the forfeiture?
A pound of man's flesh, taken from a man,
Is not so estimable, profitable neither,
As flesh of muttons, beefs, or goats. I say,
To buy his favour I extend this friendship;
If he will take it, so; if not, adieu;
And, for my love, I pray you wrong me not.

Ant.

Yes, Shylock, I will seal unto this bond.

Shy.

Then meet me forthwith at the notary's;
Give him direction for this merry bond,
And I will go and purse the ducats straight;
See to my house, left in the fearful guard
Of an unthrifty knave; and presently
I will be with you. [*Going*

Ant.

Hie thee, gentle Jew. [*Antonio and Bassanio cross to* R.
This Hebrew will turn Christian; he grows kind.

Bass.

I like not fair terms and a villain's mind.

Ant.

Come on; in this there can be no dismay;
My ships come home a month before the day.

[*Exeunt Antonio and Bassanio* R. 1 E. *Shylock gazes after them. Picture.*

CURTAIN.

Act Second.

Scene First. { VENICE. A STREET, IN FRONT OF SHYLOCK'S HOUSE.

[*Enter Launcelot Gobbo from house* R. 3. E.

Laun.

Certainly my conscience will serve me to run from this Jew, my master. The fiend is at mine elbow, and tempts me; saying to me,—"Gobbo, Launcelot Gobbo, good Launcelot, or good Gobbo, or good Launcelot Gobbo, use your legs, take the start, run away." My conscience says,—"No; take heed, honest Launcelot; take heed, honest Gobbo; or (as aforesaid) honest Launcelot Gobbo; do not run: scorn running with thy heels." Well, the most courageous fiend bids me pack. "Via!" says the fiend; "away!" says the fiend, "for the heavens; rouse up a brave mind," says the fiend, "and run." Well, my conscience, hanging about the neck of my heart, says very wisely to me,—"My honest friend, Launcelot, being an honest man's son," or rather an honest woman's son;—for, indeed, my father did something smack, something grow to, he had a kind of taste;—well, my conscience says, "Launcelot, budge not:" "Budge," says the fiend; "Budge not," says my conscience. Conscience, say I, you counsel well; fiend, say I, you counsel well: to be ruled by my conscience, I should stay with the Jew, my master, who (bless the mark!) is a kind of devil; and to run away from the Jew I should be ruled by the fiend; who, saving your reverence, is the devil himself. Certainly, the Jew is the very devil incarnation: and, in

my conscience, my conscience is a kind of hard conscience, to offer to counsel me to stay with the Jew. The fiend gives the more friendly counsel: I will run, fiend; my heels are at your commandment; I will run.

[*Enter Old Gobbo, with a basket*, R. 1. E.

Gob.

Master, young man, you, I pray you; which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun. [*Aside.*

O heavens, this is my true-begotten father! who, being more than sand-blind, high-gravel blind, knows me not: I will try confusions with him.

Gob.

Master, young gentleman, I pray you, which is the way to master Jew's?

Laun.

Turn upon your right hand at the next turning, but, at the next turning of all, on your left; marry, at the very next turning, turn of no hand, but turn down indirectly to the Jew's house.

Gob.

By sonties, 't will be a hard way to hit. Can you tell me whether one Launcelot that dwells with him dwell with him, or no?

Laun.

Talk you of young master Launcelot?—Mark me now—[*Aside.*]—now will I raise the waters: [*To Gobbo.*]—Talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gob.

No master, sir, but a poor man's son: his father, though I say 't, is an honest exceeding poor man, and, heaven be thanked, well to live.

Laun.

Well, let his father be what 'a will, we talk of young master Launcelot.

Gob.

Your worship's friend, and Launcelot, sir.

Laun.

But I pray you, *ergo*, old man, *ergo*, I beseech you, talk you of young master Launcelot?

Gob.

Of Launcelot, an 't please your mastership.

Laun.

Ergo, master Launcelot; talk not of master Launcelot, father; for the young gentleman (according to fates and destinies, and such odd sayings, the sisters three, and such branches of learning) is, indeed, deceased; or, as you would say in plain terms, gone to heaven.

Gob.

Marry, heaven forbid; the boy was the very staff of my age, my very prop.

Laun. [*Aside.*

Do I look like a cudgel, or a hovel-post, a staff, or a prop?—[*To Gobbo.*] Do you know me, father?

Gob.

Alack the day! I know you not, young gentleman: but, I pray you, tell me, is my boy (heaven rest his soul!) alive or dead?

Laun.

Do you not know me, father?

Gob.

Alack, sir, I am sand-blind; I know you not.

Laun.

Nay, indeed, if you had your eyes, you might fail of the knowing me: it is a wise father that knows his own child. Well, old man, I will tell you news of your son: Give me your blessing: truth will come to light; murder cannot be hid long; a man's son may; but, in the end, truth will out. [*Launcelot kneels with his back towards Gobbo.*

Gob.

Pray you, sir, stand up; I am sure you are not Launcelot, my boy.

Laun.

Pray you, let's have no more fooling about it, but give me your blessing; I am Launcelot, your boy that was, your son that is, your child that shall be.

Gob.

I cannot think you are my son.

Laun.

I know not what I shall think of that: but I am Launcelot, the Jew's man; and I am sure Margery, your wife, is my mother.

Gob.

Her name is Margery, indeed; I'll be sworn, if thou be Launcelot, thou art mine own flesh and blood. Lord worshipped might he be! what a beard hast thou got! thou hast got more hair on thy chin than Dobbin, my phill-horse, has on his tail.

Laun.

It should seem, then, that Dobbin's tail grows backward; I am sure he had more hair of his tail than I have of my face, when I last saw him.

Gob.

Lord, how art thou changed! How dost thou and thy master agree? I have brought him a present. How 'gree you now?

Laun.

Well, well; but for mine own part, as I have set up my rest to run away, so I will not rest till I have run some ground. My master's a very Jew. Give him a present? give him a halter! I am famished in his service; you may tell every finger I have with my ribs. Father, I am glad you are come: give me your present to one master Bassanio, who, indeed, gives rare new liveries; if I serve not him, I will run as far as heaven has any ground.—O rare fortune! here comes the man;—to him, father; for I am a Jew if I serve the Jew any longer.

[*Enter Bassanio, with Leonardo and another Servant* R. U. E.

Bass. [*To Servant.*

See these letters delivered: put the liveries to making, and desire Gratiano to come anon to my lodging.

[*Gives letters. Exit Servant.*

Laun.

To him, father.

Gob.

Heaven bless your worship! [*To Bassanio.*

Bass.

Gramercy! wouldst thou aught with me?

Gob.

Here's my son, sir, a poor boy——

Laun.

Not a poor boy, sir, but the rich Jew's man; that would, sir, as my father shall specify——

Gob.

He hath a great infection, sir, as one would say, to serve——

Laun.

Indeed, the short and the long is, I serve the Jew, and have a desire, as my father shall specify ——

Gob.

His master and he (saving your worship's reverence) are scarce cater-cousins ——

Laun.

To be brief, the very truth is, that the Jew having done me wrong, doth cause me, as my father, being I hope an old man, shall frutify unto you ——

Gob.

I have here a dish of doves, that I would bestow upon your worship; and my suit is ——

Laun.

In very brief, the suit is impertinent to myself, as your worship shall know by this honest old man; and, though I say it, though old man, yet, poor man, my father.

Bass.

One speak for both:—What would you?

Laun.

Serve you, sir.

Gob.

That is the very defect of the matter, sir.

Bass. [*To Launcelot.*

I know thee well; thou hast obtained thy suit:
Shylock, thy master, spoke with me this day,
And hath preferred thee, if it be preferment,
To leave a rich Jew's service, to become
The follower of so poor a gentleman.

Laun.

The old proverb is very well parted between my master Shylock and you, sir; you have the grace of God, sir, and he hath enough.

Bass.

Thou speak'st it well. Go, father, with thy son:—
Take leave of thy old master, and inquire
My lodging out:—give him a livery. [*To Leonardo.*
More guarded than his fellows': see it done.
[*Bassanio and Leonardo retire up.*

Laun. [*To Gobbo.*

Father, in:—I cannot get a service,—no!—I have ne'er a tongue in my head!—Well [*looking on his palm*]; if any man in Italy have a fairer table, which doth offer to swear upon a book, I shall have good fortune.—Go to, here 's a simple line of life! here 's a small trifle of wives: Alas, fifteen wives is nothing; eleven widows and nine maids, is a simple coming-in for one man: and then, to 'scape drowning thrice; and to be in peril of my life with the edge of a feather-bed; here are simple 'scapes! Well, if fortune be a woman, she 's a good wench for this gear.—Father, come. I 'll take my leave of the Jew in the twinkling of an eye.

[*Exeunt Launcelot and Old Gobbo into house* R.
Bassanio and Leonardo come down.

Bass.

I pray thee, good Leonardo, think on this;
These things being bought, and orderly bestowed,
Return in haste, for I do feast to-night
My best-esteemed acquaintance: hie thee, go.
[*Exit Bassanio* L. 1. E.

Leon.

My best endeavours shall be done herein.
[*Enter Gratiano.*

Gra. [*To Leonardo.*

Where 's your master?

Leon.

Yonder, sir, he walks. [*Exit Leonardo* R.

Gra.

Signior Bassanio—— [*Re-enter Bassanio* L.

Bass.

Gratiano!

Gra.

I have a suit to you.

Bass.

You have obtained it.

Gra.

You must not deny me: I must go with you to Belmont.

Bass.

Why, then you must.—But hear thee, Gratiano;
Thou art too wild, too rude, and bold of voice;
Parts that become thee happily enough,
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal:—Pray thee take pain
To allay with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit; lest, through thy wild behaviour,
I be misconstrued in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes.

Gra.

Signior Bassanio, hear me:
If I do not put on a sober habit,
Talk with respect, and swear but now and then,
Wear prayer-books in my pocket, look demurely;
Nay more, while grace is saying hood mine eyes
Thus with my hat, and sigh and say amen;
Use all the observance of civility,
Like one well studied in a sad ostent
To please his grandam,—never trust me more.

Bass.

Well, we shall see your bearing.

Gra.

Nay, but I bar to-night; you shall not gauge me
By what we do to-night.

Bass.

No, that were pity;
I would entreat you rather to put on
Your boldest suit of mirth, for we have friends
That purpose merriment. But fare you well,
I have some business.

Gra.

And I must to Lorènzo and the rest;
But we will visit you at supper-time.

[*Exeunt Bassanio* L. 1. E., *and Gratiano* L. U. E.

[*Enter Jessica and Launcelot from house* R.

Jes.

I am sorry thou wilt leave my father so;
Our house is hell, and thou, a merry devil,
Didst rob it of some taste of tediousness.
But fare thee well: there is a ducat for thee:
And, Launcelot, soon at supper shalt thou see
Lorenzo, who is thy new master's guest:
Give him this letter; do it secretly,
And so farewell; I would not have my father
See me in talk with thee.

Laun.

Adieu!—tears exhibit my tongue. Most beautiful Pagan,—most sweet Jew! If a Christian did not play the knave and get thee, I am much deceived. But, adieu! these foolish drops do somewhat drown my manly spirit. adieu!

Jes.

Farewell, good Launcelot. [*Exit Launcelot*
Alack, what heinous sin is it in me,
To be ashamed to be my father's child!
But though I am a daughter to his blood,
I am not to his manners: O Lorenzo,
If thou keep promise, I shall end this strife;
Become a Christian, and thy loving wife.

[*Exit into house* R.

Scene Second.—VENICE. A STREET.

[*Enter Gratiano, Lorenzo, Salarino, and Solanio*
L. 1. E.

Lor.

Nay, we will slink away in supper-time;
Disguise us at my lodging, and return
All in an hour.

Gra.

We have not made good preparation.

Salarino.

We have not spoke us yet of torch-bearers.

Solanio.

'T is vile, unless it may be quaintly ordered;
And better, in my mind, not undertook.

Lor.

'T is now but four o'clock; we have two hours
To furnish us.—
[*Enter Launcelot, with a letter*, L. 1. E.
Friend Launcelot, what 's the news?

Laun.

An it shall please you to break up this, it shall seem to signify. [*Delivers letter.*

Lor.

I know the hand: in faith, 't is a fair hand;
And whiter than the paper it writ on
Is the fair hand that writ.

Gra.

Love-news, in faith.

Laun.

By your leave, sir. [*Going.*

Lor.

Whither goest thou?

Laun.

Marry, sir, to bid my old master, the Jew, to sup to-night with my new master, the Christian.

Lor. [*Giving a piece of money.*

Hold here, take this:—tell gentle Jessica,
I will not fail her;—speak it privately:
Go. [*Exit Launcelot* R.
Gentlemen,
Will you prepare you for this masque to-night?
I am provided of a torch-bearer.

Salarino.

Ay, marry, I 'll be gone about it straight.

Solanio.

And so will I.

Lor.

Meet me and Gratiano
At Gratiano's lodging some hour hence.

Salarino.

'T is good we do so.
[*Exeunt Salarino and Solanio* R. 1. E.

Gra.

Was not that letter from fair Jessica?

Lor.

I must needs tell thee all. She hath directed
How I shall take her from her father's house;
What gold and jewels she is furnished with;
What page's suit she hath in readiness.
If e'er the Jew her father come to heaven,
It will be for his gentle daughter's sake:
And never dare misfortune cross her foot,

Unless she do it under this excuse,—
That she is issue to a faithless Jew.
Come, go with me; peruse this as thou goest:
Fair Jessica shall be my torch-bearer.

[*Exeunt Gratiano and Lorenzo* L. 1. E.

Scene Third.—A STREET BEFORE SHYLOCK'S HOUSE. DUSK.

[*Enter Shylock and Launcelot from house* R.

Shy.

Well, thou shalt see, thy eyes shall be thy judge,
The difference of old Shylock and Bassanio:
What, Jessica!—thou shalt not gormandize,
As thou hast done with me;—What, Jessica!—
And sleep and snore, and rend apparel out;—
Why, Jessica, I say!

Laun.

Why, Jessica!

Shy.

Who bids thee call? I do not bid thee call.

Laun.

Your worship was wont to tell me I could do nothing without bidding.

[*Enter Jessica from house.*

Jes.

Call you? What is your will?

Shy.

I am bid forth to supper, Jessica;
There are my keys.—But wherefore should I go?
I am not bid for love; they flatter me:

But yet I 'll go in hate, to feed upon
The prodigal Christian. — Jessica, my girl,
Look to my house: — I am right loath to go;
There is some ill a brewing towards my rest,
For I did dream of money-bags to-night.

Laun.

I beseech you, sir, go; my young master doth expect your reproach.

Shy.

So do I his.

Laun.

And they have conspired together; — I will not say, you shall see a masque; but if you do, then it was not for nothing that my nose fell a bleeding on Black-Monday last, at six o'clock i' the morning, falling out that year on Ash-Wednesday was four year in the afternoon.

Shy.

What! are there masques? Hear you me, Jessica:
Lock up my doors; and when you hear the drum,
And the vile squeaking of the wry-necked fife,
Clamber not you up to the casements then,
Nor thrust your head into the public street,
To gaze on Christian fools with varnished faces:
But stop my house's ears, I mean my casements;
Let not the sound of shallow foppery enter
My sober house. — By Jacob's staff I swear,
I have no mind of feasting forth to-night:
But I will go. — Go you before me, sirrah; [*To Launcelot.*
Say, I will come.

[*Shylock crosses toward house.*

Laun.

I will go before, sir. —
Mistress, look out at window for all this; [*To Jessica.*
There will come a Christian by,
Will be worth a Jewess' eye. [*Exit Launcelot* R. 1. E.

Shy.

What says that fool of Hagar's offspring? ha?

Jes.

His words were, Farewell, mistress; nothing else.

Shy.

The patch is kind enough; but a huge feeder,
Snail-slow in profit, and he sleeps by day
More than the wild cat: drones hive not with me;
Therefore I part with him, and part with him
To one that I would have him help to waste
His borrowed purse. — Well, Jessica, go in;
Perhaps I will return immediately;
Do as I bid you: Shut doors after you:
Fast bind, fast find;
A proverb never stale in thrifty mind.
[*Exit Shylock* R. I. E.

Jes. [*Alone.*

Farewell; and if my fortune be not crossed,
I have a father, you a daughter, lost. [*Exit into house.*

[*Enter Gratiano and Salarino, masked,* L. U. E.

Gra.

This is the pent-house, under which Lorenzo
Desired us to make stand.

Salarino.

His hour is almost past.

Gra.

And it is marvel he out-dwells his hour,
For lovers ever run before the clock.

Salarino.

O, ten times faster Venus' pigeons fly
To seal love's bonds new made, than they are wont
To keep obligèd faith unforfeited!

Gra.

That ever holds.

[*Enter Lorenzo in Gondola*, L. U. E.

Salarino.

Here comes Lorenzo.

Lor.

Sweet friends, your patience for my long abode:
Not I, but my affairs, have made you wait.
When you shall please to play the thieves for wives,
I 'll watch as long for you then. — Approach;
Here dwells my father Jew.

[*A song is sometimes introduced here.*]

[*Enter Jessica to window*

Jes.

Who are you? Tell me, for more certainty,
Albeit I 'll swear that I do know your tongue.

Lor.

Lorenzo, and thy love.

Jes.

Lorenzo, certain; and my love, indeed;
For who love I so much? And now who knows
But you, Lorenzo, whether I am yours?

Lor.

Heaven, and my thoughts, are witness that thou art!

Jes.

Here, catch this casket; it is worth the pains.

[*Throwing casket*

Lor.

Come at once;
For the close night doth play the runaway,
And we are stayed for at Bassanio's feast.

Jes.

I will make fast the doors, and gild myself
With some more ducats, and be with you straight.

[*Exit from window.*

Gra.

Now, by my hood, a Gentile, and no Jew.

Lor.

Beshrew me, but I love her heartily:
For she is wise, if I can judge of her;
And fair she is, if that mine eyes be true;
And true she is, as she hath proved herself;
And therefore, like herself, wise, fair, and true,
Shall she be placèd in my constant soul.

[*Enter Jessica.*

What, art thou come? — On, gentlemen; away!
Our masquing mates by this time for us stay.

[*They embark in gondola. Music as it starts.*

CURTAIN.

Act Third.

VENICE. A STREET.

[*Enter Salarino and Solanio* L. U. E.

Salarino.

Why, man, I saw Bassanio under sail;
With him is Gratiano gone along;
And in their ship, I am sure, Lorenzo is not.

Solanio.

The villain Jew with outcries raised the duke,
Who went with him to search Bassanio's ship.

Salarino.

He came too late, the ship was under sail:
But there the duke was given to understand
That in a gondola were seen together
Lorenzo and his amorous Jessica;
Besides, Antonio certified the duke,
They were not with Bassanio in his ship.

Solanio.

I never heard a passion so confused,
So strange, outrageous, and so variable,
As the dog Jew did utter in the streets:
"My daughter!—O my ducats!—O my daughter!
Fled with a Christian?—O my Christian ducats!—
Justice! the law! my ducats, and my daughter!
Let good Antonio look he keep his day,
Or he shall pay for this.

Salarino.

Marry, well remembered: I reasoned with a Frenchman yesterday, who told me that Antonio hath a ship of rich lading wrecked on the narrow seas,—the Goodwins, I think they call the place; a very dangerous flat, and fatal, where the carcasses of many a tall ship lie buried, as they say, if my gossip Report be an honest woman of her word.

Solanio.

I would she were as lying a gossip in that as ever knapped ginger, or made her neighbours believe she wept for the death of a third husband. But it is true that the good Antonio, the honest Antonio,—O that I had a title good enough to keep his name company!

Salarino.

Come, the full stop.

Solanio.

Why, the end is, he hath lost a ship.

Salarino.

I would it might prove the end of his losses!

Solanio.

Let me say amen betimes, lest the devil cross my prayer; for here he comes in the likeness of a Jew.

[*They cross to* R. *Enter Shylock* L. U. E.

How now, Shylock? what news among the merchants?

Shy.

You knew, none so well, none so well as you, of my daughter's flight.

Salarino.

That 's certain. I, for my part, knew the tailor that made the wings she flew withal.

Solanio.

And Shylock, for his own part, knew the bird was fledged; and then it is the complexion of them all to leave the dam.

Shy.

She is damned for it.

Salarino.

That 's certain, if the devil may be her judge.

Shy.

My own flesh and blood to rebel!

Salarino.

But tell us, do you hear whether Antonio have had any loss at sea or no?

Shy.

There I have another bad match: a bankrupt, a prodigal, who dare scarce show his head on the Rialto; a beggar, that was used to come so smug upon the mart. — Let him look to his bond! he was wont to call me usurer; — let him look to his bond: he was wont to lend money for a Christian courtesy; — let him look to his bond!

Salarino.

Why, I am sure, if he forfeit, thou wilt not take his flesh? What 's that good for?

Shy.

To bait fish withal! if it will feed nothing else, it will feed my revenge. He hath disgraced me, and hindered me half a million; laughed at my losses, mocked at my gains, scorned my nation, thwarted my bargains, cooled my friends, heated mine enemies; and what 's his reason? I am a Jew. Hath not a Jew eyes? hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions? fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapons, subject to the same diseases, healed by the same means, warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer, as a Christian is? If you prick us, do we not bleed? if you tickle us, do we not laugh? if you poison us, do we not die? and if you wrong us, shall we not revenge? If we are like you in the rest, we will resemble you in that. If a Jew wrong a Christian, what is his humility? revenge. If a Christian wrong a Jew, what should his sufferance be by Christian example? why, revenge. The villainy you teach me I will execute; and it shall go hard but I will better the instruction.

Solanio.

Here comes another of the tribe: a third cannot be matched, unless the devil himself turn Jew.

[*Exeunt Solanio and Salarino* R. I. E. *Enter Tubal* L. I. E.

Shy.

How now, Tubal? what news from Genoa? hast thou found my daughter?

Tub.

I often came where I did hear of her, but cannot find her.

Shy.

Why, there, there, there, there! a diamond gone, cost me two thousand ducats in Frankfort! The curse never fell upon our nation till now; I never felt it till now:—two thousand ducats in that; and other precious, precious jewels.—I would my daughter were dead at my foot, and the jewels in her ear! would she were hearsed at my foot, and the ducats in her coffin! No news of them?—Why, so:—and I know not what 's spent in the search. Why, thou loss upon loss! the thief gone with so much, and so much to find the thief; and no satisfaction, no revenge: nor no ill luck stirring but what lights o' my shoulders; no sighs, but o' my breathing; no tears, but o' my shedding.

Tub.

Yes, other men have ill luck too. Antonio, as I heard in Genoa——

Shy.

What, what, what? ill luck, ill luck?

Tub.

Hath an argosy cast away, coming from Tripolis.

Shy.

I thank God! I thank God! Is it true? is it true?

Tub.

I spoke with some of the sailors that escaped the wreck.

Shy.

I thank thee, good Tubal;—Good news, good news! ha! ha! Where? in Genoa?

Tub.

Your daughter spent in Genoa, as, I heard, one night, fourscore ducats.

Shy.

Thou stick'st a dagger in me!—I shall never see my gold again. Fourscore ducats at a sitting! fourscore ducats!

Tub.

There came divers of Antonio's creditors in my company to Venice, that swear he cannot choose but break.

Shy.

I am very glad of it. I 'll plague him; I 'll torture him. I am glad of it.

Tub.

One of them showed me a ring, that he had of your daughter for a monkey.

Shy.

Out upon her! Thou torturest me, Tubal: it was my turquoise; I had it of Leah, when I was a bachelor: I would not have given it for a wilderness of monkeys.

Tub.

But Antonio is certainly undone.

Shy.

Nay, that 's true, that 's very true. Go, Tubal, fee me an officer; bespeak him a fortnight before: I will have the heart of him, if he forfeit; for were he out of Venice I can make what merchandise I will. Go, Tubal, and meet me at our synagogue; go, good Tubal; at our synagogue, Tubal. [*Exeunt.*

CURTAIN.

Act Fourth.

Scene First. BELMONT. A ROOM IN PORTIA'S HOUSE. THREE CASKETS,—GOLD, SILVER AND LEAD,—ON TABLE. C. BASSANIO, PORTIA, GRATIANO, NERISSA, AND ATTENDANTS DISCOVERED.

Bass.

I am enjoined by oath to observe three things:
First, never to unfold to any one
Which casket 't was I chose; next, if I fail
Of the right casket, never in my life
To woo a maid in way of marriage; lastly,
If I do fail in fortune of my choice,
Immediately to leave you and be gone.

Por.

To these injunctions every one doth swear
That comes to hazard for my worthless self.

Bass.

And so have I addressed me: Fortune now
To my heart's hope!

Por.

I pray you, tarry; pause a day or two,
Before you hazard; for, in choosing wrong,
I lose your company; therefore, forbear a while:
There 's something tells me, but it is not love,
I would not lose you; and you know yourself,
Hate counsels not in such a quality.

I could teach you
How to choose right, but then I am forsworn;
So will I never be: so may you miss me;
But if you do, you'll make me wish a sin,
That I had been forsworn.
I speak too long; but 't is to peize the time,
To eke it, and to draw it out in length,
To stay you from election.

Bass.

Let me choose;
For, as I am, I live upon the rack.

Por.

Upon the rack, Bassanio? then confess
What treason there is mingled with your love.

Bass.

None but that ugly treason of mistrust,
Which makes me fear the enjoying of my love.

Por.

Ay, but I fear you speak upon the rack,
Where men enforced do speak anything.

Bass.

Promise me life, and I'll confess the truth.

Por.

Well then, confess, and live.

Bass.

Confess and love
Had been the very sum of my confession.
O happy torment, when my torturer

Doth teach me answers for deliverance:
Come, let me to my fortune and the caskets.

Por.

Away then.
I am locked in one of them;
If you do love me you will find me out.
Nerissa, and the rest, stand all aloof. [*They retire*
Let music sound, while he doth make his choice;
Then, if he lose, he makes a swan-like end,
Fading in music: that the comparison
May stand more proper, my eye shall be the stream,
And watery death-bed for him. [*Music.*
Now he goes with no less presence, but with much more love,
Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
The virgin tribute paid by howling Troy
To the sea monster! I stand for sacrifice;
The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
With bleared visages, come forth to view
The issue of the exploit. Go, Hercules!
Live thou, I live: with much more dismay
I view the fight, than thou that mak'st the fray.

Bass.

Some good direct my judgment! — Let me see. —
"Who chooseth me shall gain
What many men desire." } [*Reads on casket.*
That may be meant
Of the fool multitude that choose by show.
The world is still deceived with ornament.
In law, what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But, being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the show of evil? In religion,
What damnèd error, but some sober brow
Will bless it, and approve it with a text,
Hiding the grossness with fair ornament?

Thus ornament is but the guilèd shore
To a most dangerous sea; the beauteous scarf
Veiling an Indian beauty.
Therefore, thou gaudy gold,
Hard food for Midas, I will none of thee.

"Who chooseth me shall get
As much as he deserves." } [*Reads on second casket.*

And well said, too: for who shall go about
To cozen fortune, and be honourable
Without the stamp of merit?
O, that estates, degrees, and offices
Were not derived corruptly! and that clear honour
Were purchased by the merit of the wearer!
How many then should cover that stand bare!
How many be commanded that command!
And how much honour
Picked from the chaff and ruin of the times,
To be new varnished!
"Much as he deserves."
I'll not assume desert.

"Who chooseth me must give
And hazard all he hath." } [*Reads on third casket.*

I'll none of thee, thou pale and common drudge
'Tween man and man. But thou, thou meagre lead,
Which rather threat'nest than dost promise aught.
Thy paleness moves me more than eloquence,
And here choose I. Joy be the consequence!

Por.

How all the other passions fleet to air!
O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy;
I feel too much thy blessing; make it less,
For fear I surfeit!

Bass.

What find I here? [*Opening the leaden casket.*
Fair Portia's counterfeit?
What demi-god hath come so near creation?
Move these eyes?
Or whether, riding on the balls of mine,
Seemed they in motion? Here are severed lips,
Parted with sugar breath; so sweet a bar
Should sunder such sweet friends. Here in her hair
The painter plays the spider, and hath woven
A golden mesh t' entrap the hearts of men
Faster than gnats in cobwebs; but her eyes!
How could he see them? having made one,
Methinks it should have power to steal both his,
And leave itself unfurnished.
Yet look, how far the substance
Of my praise doth wrong his shadow
In underprising it, so far this shadow
Doth limp behind the substance.
Here's the scroll,
The continent and summary of my fortune.

"You that choose not by the view,
Chance as fair, and choose as true:
Since this fortune falls to you,
Be content, and seek no new.
If you be well pleased with this,
And hold your fortune for your bliss,
Turn you where your lady is,
And claim her with a loving kiss." *Reads on scroll.*

A gentle scroll. — Fair lady, by your leave; [*To Portia*
I come by note, to give and to receive;
Yet doubtful whether what I see be true,
Until confirmed, signed, ratified by you.

[*He kneels and kisses her hand.* — *Music ceases.*

Por.

You see me, Lord Bassanio, where I stand,
Such as I am: though, for myself alone,
I would not be ambitious in my wish,
To wish myself much better; yet, for you,
I would be trebled twenty times myself;
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times more rich;
That, only to stand high in your account,
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed account. But now I was the lord
Of this fair mansion, master of my servants,
Queen o'er myself; and even now, but now,
This house, these servants, and this same myself
Are yours, my lord. I give them with this ring;
Which, when you part from, lose, or give away,
Let it presage the ruin of your love,
And be my vantage to exclaim on you.

Bass.

Madam, you have bereft me of all words;
Only my blood speaks to you in my veins:
But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence:
O, then be bold to say, Bassanio's dead.

Ner.

My lord and lady, it is now our time,
That have stood by, and seen our wishes prosper,
To cry, good joy! Good joy, my lord and lady!

Gra.

My lord Bassanio, and my gentle lady,
I wish you all the joy that you can wish,
For I am sure you can wish none from me:

And when your honours mean to solemnize
The bargain of your faith, I do beseech you,
Even at that time I may be married too.

Bass.

With all my heart, so thou canst get a wife.

Gra.

I thank your lordship; you have got me one.
My eyes, my lord, can look as swift as yours:
You saw the mistress, I beheld the maid;
You loved, I loved; for intermission
No more pertains to me, my lord, than you.
Your fortune stood upon the caskets there;
And so did mine too, as the matter falls:
For wooing here, until I sweat again,
And swearing, till my very roof was dry
With oaths of love, at last, — if promise last, —
I got a promise of this fair one here,
To have her love, provided that your fortune
Achieved her mistress.

Por.

Is this true, Nerissa?

Ner.

Madam, it is, so you stand pleased withal.

Bass.

And do you, Gratiano, mean good faith?

Gra.

Yes, faith, my lord.

Bass.

Our feast shall be much honoured in your marriage.

Gra.

But who comes here? Lorenzo, and his infidel?
What! and my old Venetian friend, Salerio?

[*Enter Lorenzo and Jessica; after them Salerio,*

Bass.

Lorenzo, and Salerio, welcome hither;
If that the youth of my new interest here
Have power to bid you welcome:—By your leave,
I bid my very friends and countrymen,
Sweet Portia, welcome.

Por.

So do I, my lord;
They are entirely welcome.

Lor.

I thank your honour:— [*To Portia.*
For my part, my lord,
My purpose was not to have seen you here;
But meeting with Salerio by the way,
He did entreat me, past all saying nay,
To come with him along.

Salerio.

I did, my lord,
And I have reason for it. Signior Antonio
Commends him to you. [*Gives Bassanio a letter.*

Bass.

Ere I ope his letter,
I pray you tell me how my good friend doth.

Salerio.

Not sick, my lord, unless it be in mind;
Nor well, unless in mind: his letter there
Will show you his estate. [*Bassanio opens letter.*

Gra.

Nerissa, cheer yon stranger; bid her welcome.
[*Nerissa goes to Jessica.*

Your hand, Salerio. What 's the news from Venice?
How doth that royal merchant, good Antonio?
I know he will be glad of our success;
We are the Jasons; we have won the fleece.

Salerio.

I would you had won the fleece that he hath lost!

Por.

There are some shrewd contents in yon same paper
That steal the colour from Bassanio's cheek;
Some dear friend dead; else nothing in the world
Could turn so much the constitution
Of any constant man. What, worse and worse?—
With leave, Bassanio; I am half yourself,
And I must freely have the half of any thing
That this same paper brings you.

Bass.

O sweet Portia,
Here are a few of the unpleasant'st words
That ever blotted paper! Gentle lady,
When I did first impart my love to you,
I freely told you, all the wealth I had
Ran in my veins,—I was a gentleman;
And then I told you true: and yet, dear lady,
Rating myself at nothing, you shall see
How much I was a braggart. When I told you
My state was nothing, I should then have told you
That I was worse than nothing; for, indeed,
I have engaged myself to a dear friend,
Engaged my friend to his mere enemy,
To feed my means. Here is a letter, lady;
The paper as the body of my friend,
And every word in it a gaping wound,
Issuing life-blood. But is it true, Salerio?
Have all his ventures failed? What, not one hit?
From Tripolis, from Mexico, and England,
And not one vessel 'scape the dreadful touch
Of merchant-marring rocks?

Salerio.

Not one, my lord.
Besides, it should appear that if he had
The present money to discharge the Jew,
He would not take it. Never did I know
A creature that did bear the shape of man,
So keen and greedy to confound a man.
He plies the duke at morning, and at night,
And doth impeach the freedom of the state,
If they deny him justice: twenty merchants,
The duke himself, and the magnificoes
Of greatest port, have all persuaded with him;
But none can drive him from the envious plea
Of forfeiture, of justice, and his bond.

Por.

Is it your dear friend that is thus in trouble?

Bass.

The dearest friend to me, the kindest man,
The best conditioned and unwearied spirit
In doing courtesies; and one in whom
The ancient Roman honour more appears,
Than any that draws breath in Italy.

Por.

What sum owes he the Jew?

Bass.

For me, three thousand ducats.

Por.

What, no more?
Pay him six thousand, and deface the bond;
Double six thousand, and then treble that,
Before a friend of this description
Shall lose a hair through my Bassanio's fault.
Then, love, away to Venice to your friend:

For never shall you lie by Portia's side
With an unquiet soul. You shall have gold
To pay the petty debt twenty times over;
When it is paid, bring your true friend along:
My maid Nerissa, and myself, meantime
Will live as maids and widows. Come, away;
For you shall hence upon your wedding-day
Bid your friends welcome, show a merry cheer;
Since you are dear bought, I will love you dear.
But let me hear the letter of your friend.

Bass. [*Reads.*

"Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried, my creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to the Jew is forfeit; and since, in paying it, it is impossible I should live, all debts are cleared between you and I, if I might but see you at my death: notwithstanding, use your pleasure: if your love do not persuade you to come, let not my letter."

Por.

O love, despatch all business, and be gone.

Bass.

Since I have your good leave to go away,
I will make haste; but, till I come again,
No bed shall ere be guilty of my stay,
Nor rest be interposer 'twixt us twain. [*Exeunt* R.

Lor.

Madam, although I speak it in your presence,
You have a noble and a true conceit
Of godlike amity; which appears most strongly

In bearing thus the absence of your lord.
But, if you knew to whom you show this honour,
How true a gentleman you send relief,
How dear a lover of my lord, your husband,
I know you would be prouder of the work,
Than customary bounty can enforce you.

Por.

I never did repent for doing good,
Nor shall not now:
This comes too near the praising of myself;
Therefore, no more of it: hear other things.
Lorenzo, I commit into your hands
The husbandry and manage of my house,
Until my lord's return: for mine own part,
I have toward heaven breathed a secret vow
To live in prayer and contemplation,
Only attended by Nerissa here,
Until her husband and my lord's return:
There is a monastery two miles off,
And there we will abide. I do desire you
Not to deny this imposition,
The which my love, and some necessity,
Now lays upon you.

Lor.

Madam, with all my heart,
I shall obey you in all fair commands.

Por.

My people will acknowledge you and Jessica
In place of Lord Bassanio and myself:
And so, farewell till we shall meet again.

Lor.

Fair thoughts and happy hours attend on you!

Jes.

I wish your ladyship all heart's content.

Por.

I thank you for your wish, and am well pleased
To wish it back on you: fare you well, Jessica.
[*Exeunt Jessica and Lorenzo* L. 1. E. *Enter Balthazar* R. 1. E.
Now, Balthazar,
As I have ever found thee honest, true,
So let me find thee still. Take this same letter,
And use thou all the endeavour of a man
In speed to Padua; see thou render this
Into my cousin's hand, Doctor Bellario;
And, look, what notes and garments he doth give thee,
Bring them, I pray thee, with imagined speed
Unto the tranect, to the common ferry
Which trades to Venice;—waste no time in words,
But get thee gone; I shall be there before thee.

Balth.

Madam, I go with all convenient speed. [*Exit* R. 1. E.

Por.

Come on, Nerissa; I have work in hand
That you yet know not of: we 'll see our husbands
Before they think of us.

Ner.

Shall they see us?

Por.

They shall, Nerissa; but in such a habit,
That they shall think we are accomplished
With that we lack. I'll hold thee any wager,
When we are both accoutred like young men,
I'll prove the prettier fellow of the two,
And wear my dagger with the braver grace;

And speak between the change of man and boy,
With a reed voice; and speak of frays,
Like a fine bragging youth; and tell quaint lies,
How honourable ladies sought my love,
Which I denying, they fell sick and died:
And twenty of these puny lies I'll tell,
That men shall swear I've discontinued school
Above a twelvemonth. I have within my mind
A thousand raw tricks of these bragging jacks
Which I will practise:
But come, I'll tell thee all my whole device
When I am in my coach, which stays for us
At the park gate; and therefore haste away,
For we must measure twenty miles to-day.

CURTAIN.

Act Fifth.

Scene First. Venice. A Court of Justice. The Duke, the Magnificoes, Antonio, Bassanio, Gratiano, Salarino, Solanio, Salerio, and others discovered.

Duke.

What, is Antonio here?

Ant.

Ready, so please your grace.

Duke.

I am sorry for thee; thou art come to answer
A stony adversary, an inhuman wretch
Uncapable of pity, void and empty
From any dram of mercy.

Ant.

I have heard
Your grace hath ta'en great pains to qualify
His rigorous course; but since he stands obdurate,
And that no lawful means can carry me
Out of his envy's reach, I do oppose
My patience to his fury; and am armed
To suffer, with a quietness of spirit,
The very tyranny and rage of his.

Duke.

Go one, and call the Jew into the court.

Solanio.

He 's ready at the door: he comes, my lord.

[*Enter Shylock* R. 1. E.

Duke.

Make room, and let him stand before our face.
Shylock, the world thinks, and I think so too,
That thou but lead'st this fashion of thy malice
To the last hour of act; and then, 't is thought,
Thou 'lt show thy mercy and remorse, more strange
Than is thy strange apparent cruelty:
And where thou now exact'st the penalty
(Which is a pound of this poor merchant's flesh),
Thou wilt not only lose the forfeiture,
But, touched with human gentleness and love,
Forgive a moiety of the principal;
Glancing an eye of pity on his losses,
That have of late so huddled on his back,
Enough to press a royal merchant down,
And pluck commiseration of his state
From brassy bosoms, and rough hearts of flint,
From stubborn Turks and Tartars, never trained
To offices of tender courtesy.
We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.

Shy.

I have possessed your grace of what I purpose;
And by our holy Sabbath have I sworn
To have the due and forfeit of my bond:
If you deny it, let the danger light
Upon your charter and your city's freedom.
You 'll ask me why I rather choose to have
A weight of carrion flesh, than to receive
Three thousand ducats. I 'll not answer that:
But, say, it is my humour: Is it answered?
What if my house be troubled with a rat,
And I be pleased to give ten thousand ducats
To have it baned? What, are you answered yet?
Some men there are love not a gaping pig;
Some, that are mad if they behold a cat:

Now, for your answer:
As there is no firm reason to be rendered,
Why he cannot abide a gaping pig;
Why he, a harmless necessary cat;
So can I give no reason, nor I will not,
More than a lodged hate, and a certain loathing,
I bear Antonio, that I follow thus
A losing suit against him. Are you answered?

Bass.

This is no answer, thou unfeeling man,
To excuse the current of thy cruelty.

Shy.

I am not bound to please thee with my answer.

Bass.

Do all men kill the things they do not love?

Shy.

Hates any man the thing he would not kill?

Bass.

Every offence is not a hate at first.

Shy.

What, wouldst thou have a serpent sting thee twice?

Ant.

I pray you, think you question with the Jew:
You may as well go stand upon the beach,
And bid the main flood bate his usual height;
You may as well use question with the wolf,
Why he hath made the ewe bleat for the lamb;
You may as well forbid the mountain pines
To wag their high tops, and to make no noise,
When they are fretted with the gusts of heaven;

You may as well do any thing most hard,
As seek to soften that (than which what 's harder?)
His Jewish heart: — Therefore, I do beseech you,
Make no more offers, use no further means,
But, with all brief and plain conveniency,
Let me have judgment, and the Jew his will.

Bass.

For thy three thousand ducats here is six.

Shy.

If every ducat in six thousand ducats
Were in six parts, and every part a ducat,
I would not draw them, — I would have my bond.

Duke.

How shalt thou hope for mercy, rend'ring none?

Shy.

What judgment shall I dread, doing no wrong?
You have among you many a purchased slave,
Which, like your asses, and your dogs, and mules,
You use in abject and in slavish parts,
Because you bought them: — Shall I say to you,
Let them be free, marry them to your heirs?
Why sweat they under burthens? let their beds
Be made as soft as yours, and let their palates
Be seasoned with such viands? You will answer,
The slaves are ours: — So do I answer you:
The pound of flesh, which I demand of him,
Is dearly bought; 't is mine, and I will have it:
If you deny me, fie upon your law!
There is no force in the decrees of Venice:
I stand for judgment: answer, shall I have it?

Duke.

Upon my power, I may dismiss this court,
Unless Bellario, a learnèd doctor,
Whom I have sent for to determine this,
Come here to-day.

Salarino.

My lord, here stays without
A messenger with letters from the doctor,
New come from Padua.

Duke.

Bring us the letters; call the messenger.

[*Exeunt Solanio and Salarino.*

Bass.

Good cheer, Antonio! What, man! courage yet!
The Jew shall have my flesh, blood, bones, and all,
Ere thou shalt lose for me one drop of blood.

Ant.

I am a tainted wether of the flock,
Meetest for death; the weakest kind of fruit
Drops earliest to the ground, and so let me:
You cannot better be employed, Bassanio,
Than to live still, and write mine epitaph.

[*Re-enter Solanio and Salarino with Nerissa, who is dressed like a lawyer's clerk. Shylock kneels to whet his knife.*

Duke. [*To Nerissa.*

Came you from Padua, from Bellario?

Ner.

From both, my lord: Bellario greets your grace.

[*Presents a letter, and then sits at table* C.

Bass. [*To Shylock.*

Why dost thou whet thy knife so earnestly?

Shy.

To cut the forfeiture from that bankrupt there.

Gra.

Not on thy sole, but on thy soul, harsh Jew,
Thou mak'st thy knife keen.
Can no prayers pierce thee?

Shy.

No, none that thou hast wit enough to make.

Gra.

O, be thou damned, inexorable dog!
And for thy life let justice be accused.
Thou almost mak'st me waver in my faith,
To hold opinion with Pythagoras,
That souls of animals infuse themselves
Into the trunks of men: thy currish spirit
Governed a wolf, who, hanged for human slaughter
Even from the gallows did his fell soul fleet,
And, whilst thou lay'st in thy unhallowed dam,
Infused itself in thee; for thy desires
Are wolfish, bloody, starved, and ravenous.

Shy.

Till thou canst rail the seal from off my bond,
Thou but offend'st thy lungs to speak so loud:
Repair thy wit, good youth, or it will fall
To cureless ruin.—I stand here for law.

Duke.

This letter from Bellario doth commend
A young and learnèd doctor to our court:
Where is he?

Ner. [*Rises.*

He attendeth here hard by,
To know your answer, whether you 'll admit him.

Duke.

With all my heart:—Go, some of you,
And give him courteous conduct to this place.—
[*Exeunt Salarino, Solanio, and Gratiano* R. 1. E.
Meantime, the court shall hear Bellario's letter. [*Reads.*

"Your grace shall understand that, at the receipt of your letter, I am very sick: but in the instant that your

messenger came, in loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome; his name is Balthazar: I acquainted him with the cause in controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant: we turned o'er many books together: he is furnished with my opinion; which, bettered with his own learning (the greatness whereof I cannot enough commend), comes with him, at my importunity, to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I beseech you, let his lack of years be no impediment to let him lack a reverend estimation; for I never knew so young a body with so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance, whose trial shall better publish his commendation."

You hear the learned Bellario what he writes:

[*Re-enter Gratiano.*

And here, I take it, is the doctor come.—

[*Re-enter Salarino and Solanio, with Portia, who is dressed like a Doctor of Laws.*

Give me your hand: Came you from old Bellario?

Por.

I did, my lord.

Duke.

You are welcome: take your place. [*Portia goes to desk* R.
Are you acquainted with the difference
That holds this present question in the court?

Por.

I am informèd throughly of the cause.
Which is the Merchant here, and which the Jew?

Duke.

Antonio and old Shylock, both stand forth.

[*Antonio and Shylock advance.*

Por.

Is your name Shylock?

Shy.

Shylock is my name.

Por.

Of a strange nature is the suit you follow;
Yet in such rule that the Venetian law
Cannot impugn you, as you do proceed.—
You stand within his danger, do you not? [*To Antonio.*

Ant.

Ay, so he says.

Por.

Do you confess the bond?

Ant.

I do.

Por.

Then must the Jew be merciful.

Shy.

On what compulsion must I? tell me that.

Por.

The quality of mercy is not strained;
It droppeth, as the gentle rain from heaven
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blessed;
It blesseth him that gives, and him that takes:
'T is mightiest in the mightiest; it becomes
The thronèd monarch better than his crown;
His sceptre shows the force of temporal power,
The attribute to awe and majesty,
Wherein doth sit the dread and fear of kings;
But mercy is above this sceptered sway,
It is enthronèd in the hearts of kings,
It is an attribute to God himself;
And earthly power doth then show likest God's,
When mercy seasons justice. Therefore, Jew,
Though justice be thy plea, consider this—
That, in the course of justice, none of us
Should see salvation: we do pray for mercy;

And that same prayer doth teach us all to render
The deeds of mercy. I have spoke thus much,
To mitigate the justice of thy plea;
Which if thou follow, this strict court of Venice
Must needs give sentence 'gainst the merchant there.

Shy.

My deeds upon my head! I crave the law,
The penalty and forfeit of my bond.

Por.

Is he not able to discharge the money?

Bass.

Yes, here I tender it for him in the court;
Yea, thrice the sum: if that will not suffice,
I will be bound to pay it ten times o'er,
On forfeit of my hands, my head, my heart:
If this will not suffice, it must appear
That malice bears down truth. And I beseech you,
Wrest once the law to your authority:
To do a great right, do a little wrong,
And curb this cruel devil of his will.

Por.

It must not be; there is no power in Venice
Can alter a decree established:
'T will be recorded for a precedent;
And many an error, by the same example,
Will rush into the state:—it cannot be.

Shy.

A Daniel come to judgment! yea, a Daniel!
O wise young judge, how do I honour thee!

Por.

I pray you, let me look upon the bond.

Shy.

Here 't is, most reverend doctor; here it is.

[*Gives bond to Portia.*

Por.

Shylock, there 's thrice thy money offered thee.

Shy.

An oath, an oath, I have an oath in heaven:
Shall I lay perjury upon my soul?
No, not for Venice.

Por.

Why, this bond is forfeit;
And lawfully by this the Jew may claim
A pound of flesh, to be by him cut off
Nearest the merchant's heart:—Be merciful;
Take thrice thy money; bid me tear the bond.

Shy.

When it is paid according to the tenour.
It doth appear you are a worthy judge;
You know the law; your exposition
Hath been most sound: I charge you by the law,
Whereof you are a well-deserving pillar,
Proceed to judgment: by my soul I swear,
There is no power in the tongue of man
To alter me: I stay here on my bond.

Ant.

Most heartily I do beseech the court
To give the judgment.

Por.

Why, then, thus it is:
You must prepare your bosom for his knife——

Shy.

O noble judge! O excellent young man!

Por.

For the intent and purpose of the law
Hath full relation to the penalty,
Which here appeareth due upon the bond.

Shy.

'T is very true: O wise and upright judge!
How much more elder art thou than thy looks!

Por.

Therefore, lay bare your bosom.

Shy. [*Takes bond from Portia.*

Ay, his breast:
So says the bond;—Doth it not, noble judge?—
Nearest his heart,—those are the very words.
[*Returns bond to Portia.*

Por.

It is so. Are there balance here to weigh the flesh?

Shy.

I have them ready.

Por.

Have by some surgeon, Shylock, on your charge,
To stop his wounds, lest he do bleed to death.

Shy. [*Takes bond from Portia.*

Is it so nominated in the bond?

Por.

It is not so expressed; but what of that?
'T were good you do so much for charity.

Shy.

I cannot find it; 't is not in the bond.
[*Returns bond to Portia.*

Por. [*To Antonio.*

Come, merchant, have you anything to say?

Ant.

But little; I am armed, and well prepared.—
Give me your hand, Bassanio; fare you well!
[*Portia leaves desk, crosses to the Duke, confers with him, and shows bond.*
Grieve not that I am fallen to this for you,
For herein Fortune shows herself more kind
Than is her custom: it is still her use
To let the wretchèd man outlive his wealth,
To view with hollow eye and wrinkled brow
An age of poverty; from which ling'ring penance
Of such a misery doth she cut me off.
Commend me to your honourable wife:
Tell her the process of Antonio's end;
Say, how I loved you, speak me fair in death;
And, when the tale is told, bid her be judge
Whether Bassanio had not once a love.
Repent not you that you shall lose your friend,
And he repents not that he pays your debt;
For, if the Jew do cut but deep enough,
I 'll pay it instantly with all my heart.

Bass.

Antonio, I am married to a wife,
Which is as dear to me as life itself;
But life itself, my wife, and all the world,
Are not with me esteemed above thy life;
I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
Here to this devil, to deliver you.
[*During this speech Portia returns to desk.*

Gra.

I have a wife, whom, I protest, I love;
I would she were in heaven, so she could
Entreat some power to change this currish Jew.

Shy.

These be the Christian husbands! I have a daughter;
Would any of the stock of Barrabas
Had been her husband, rather than a Christian! [*Aside.*
We trifle time; I pray thee pursue sentence.

Por.

A pound of that same merchant's flesh is thine;
The court awards it, and the law doth give it.

Shy.

Most rightful judge!

Por.

And you must cut this flesh from off his breast;
The law allows it, and the court awards it.

Shy.

Most learnèd judge!—
A sentence! come, prepare!
[*To Antonio, who advances to* C. *and kneels. All shrink back.*

Por.

Tarry a little;—there is something else.—
This bond doth give thee here no jot of blood;
[*All start.*
The words expressly are, a pound of flesh:
Take then thy bond, take thou thy pound of flesh;
But, in the cutting it, if thou dost shed
One drop of Christian blood, thy lands and goods
Are, by the laws of Venice, confiscate
Unto the state of Venice.
[*All express delight. Antonio rises and embraces Bassanio.*

Gra.

O upright judge!—Mark, Jew!—O learnèd judge!

Shy.

Is that the law?

Por.

Thyself shall see the act:
For, as thou urgest justice, be assured
Thou shalt have justice, more than thou desirest.

Gra.

O learnèd judge!—Mark, Jew;—a learnèd judge!

Shy.

I take this offer then,—pay the bond thrice,
And let the Christian go.

Bass.

Here is the money. [*Gratiano interposes.*

Por.

Soft!
The Jew shall have all justice;—soft;—no haste;—
He shall have nothing but the penalty.

Gra.

O Jew! an upright judge, a learnèd judge!

Por. [*To Shylock.*

Therefore, prepare thee to cut off the flesh.
Shed thou no blood; nor cut thou less, nor more,
But just a pound of flesh: if thou tak'st more,
Or less, than a just pound,—be it but so much
As makes it light, or heavy, in the substance,
Or the division of the twentieth part
Of one poor scruple,—nay, if the scale do turn
But in the estimation of a hair,—
Thou diest, and all thy goods are confiscate.

Gra.

A second Daniel; a Daniel, Jew!
Now, infidel, I have thee on the hip.

Por.

Why doth the Jew pause? take thy forfeiture.

Shy.

Give me my principal, and let me go.

Bass.

I have it ready for thee; here it is.
[*Shylock takes a bag of money; Gratiano seizes and takes it from him.*

Por.

He hath refused it in the open court;
He shall have merely justice, and his bond.

Gra.

[*Pushing Shylock towards* L.
A Daniel, still say I; a second Daniel!
I thank thee, Jew, for teaching me that word.

Shy.

Shall I not have barely my principal?

Por.

Thou shalt have nothing but the forfeiture,
[*Portia comes from desk, gives bond to Shylock, and goes to table* C.
To be so taken at thy peril, Jew.

Shy.

Why, then the devil give him good of it!
I 'll stay no longer question.
[*Going* R. *Gratiano stops him.*

Por.

Tarry, Jew;
The law hath yet another hold on you.
It is enacted in the laws of Venice,—
If it be proved against an alien,

That by direct, or indirect, attempts,
He seek the life of any citizen,
The party 'gainst the which he doth contrive
Shall seize one half his goods; the other half
Comes to the privy coffer of the state;
And the offender's life lies in the mercy
Of the duke only, 'gainst all other voice.
In which predicament, I say, thou stand'st:
For it appears by manifest proceeding,
That, indirectly, and directly too,
Thou hast contrived against the very life,
Of the defendant; and thou hast incurred
The danger formerly by me rehearsed.
Down, therefore, and beg mercy of the duke.

Gra.

[*Shylock is about to kneel; Graziano holds him by the shoulder, during the rest of this speech, and then drops him.*

Beg that thou may'st have leave to hang thyself:
And yet, thy wealth being forfeit to the state,
Thou hast not left the value of a cord;
Therefore, thou must be hanged at the state's charge.

Duke.

That thou shalt see the difference of our spirit,
I pardon thee thy life before thou ask it:
For half thy wealth, it is Antonio's;
The other half comes to the general state,
Which humbleness may drive unto a fine.

Por.

Ay, for the state; not for Antonio.

Shy.

Nay, take my life and all; pardon not that:
You take my house, when you do take the prop
That doth sustain my house; you take my life,
When you do take the means whereby I live.

Por.

What mercy can you render him, Antonio?

[*Shylock rises*

Gra.

A halter gratis; nothing else, for heaven's sake!

Ant.

So please my lord the duke, and all the court,
To quit the fine for one half of his goods,
I am content, so he will let me have
The other half in use, to render it,
Upon his death, unto the gentleman
That lately stole his daughter;
Two things provided more,—that, for this favour,
He presently become a Christian;
The other, that he do record a gift,
Here in the court, of all he dies possessed,
Unto his son Lorenzo and his daughter.

Duke.

He shall do this; or else I do recant
The pardon that I late pronouncèd here.

Por. [*Advances. To Shylock.*

Art thou contented, Jew; what dost thou say?

Shy.

I am content.

Por. [*Goes up.*

Clerk, draw a deed of gift.

Shy.

I pray you give me leave to go from hence:
I am not well. Send the deed after me,
And I will sign it.

Duke.

Get thee gone, but do it.

Gra.

[*As Shylock is going, Gratiano seizes his left arm.*

In christ'ning, thou shalt have two godfathers;
Had I been judge, thou shouldst have had ten more,
To bring thee to the gallows, not the font.

[*Exit Shylock* R. I. E.

Duke. [*To Portia*

Sir, I entreat you home with me to dinner.

Por.

I humbly do desire your grace of pardon.
I must away this night toward Padua,
And it is meet I presently set forth.

Duke.

I am sorry that your leisure serves you not. —
Antonio, gratify this gentleman,
For in my mind you are much bound to him.

[*Exeunt Duke and Attendants.*

Bass.

Most worthy gentleman, I and my friend
Have by your wisdom been this day acquitted
Of grievous penalties; in lieu whereof,
Three thousand ducats, due unto the Jew,
We freely cope your courteous pains withal.

Ant.

And stand indebted, over and above,
In love and service to you evermore.

Por.

He is well paid that is well satisfied;
And I, delivering you, am satisfied.
I pray you, know me when we meet again.

Bass.

Take some remembrance of us, as a tribute,
Not as a fee.

Por.

Well, for your love, I'll take this ring from you.
Do not draw back your hand: I'll take no more,
And you in love shall not deny me this.

Bass.

This ring, good sir, — alas, it is a trifle;
I will not shame myself to give you this.

Por.

I will have nothing else but only this;
And now, methinks, I have a mind to it.

Bass.

There's more depends on this than on the value.
The dearest ring in Venice will I give you;
Only for this, I pray you, pardon me.

Por.

I see, sir, you are liberal in offers:
You taught me first to beg, and now methinks
You teach me how a beggar should be answered.

Bass.

Good sir, this ring was given me by my wife;
And when she put it on, she made me vow
That I should neither sell, nor give, nor lose it.

Por.

That 'scuse serves many men to save their gifts.
An if your wife be not a mad woman,
And know how well I have deserved this ring,
She would not hold out enemy forever
For giving it to me. Well, peace be with you!

[*Exeunt Portia and Nerissa.*

Ant.

My lord Bassanio, let him have the ring;
Let his deservings, and my love withal,
Be valued 'gainst your wife's commandment.

Bass.

Go, Gratiano, run and overtake him;
Give him the ring. Away! make haste!
And in the morning early will we both
Fly towards Belmont. Come, Antonio.

CURTAIN.

Act Sixth.

THE GARDEN AT BELMONT.

[*Enter Jessica and Launcelot. — Lorenzo at distance.*

Laun.

Yes, truly: for, look you, the sins of the father are to be laid upon the children: therefore I promise you, I fear you. I was always plain with you, and so now I speak my agitation of the matter: therefore be of good cheer; for truly, I think — you are damned. There 's but one hope in it that can do you any good, and that is but a kind of bastard hope neither.

Jes.

And what hope is that, I pray thee?

Laun.

Marry, you may partly hope that your father got you not, that you are not the Jew's daughter.

Jes.

That were a kind of bastard hope, indeed; so the sins of my mother should be visited upon me.

Laun.

Truly, then, I fear you are damned both by father and mother: thus when I shun Scylla, your father, I fall into Charybdis, your mother. Well, you are gone both ways.

Jes.

I shall be saved by my husband: he hath made me a Christian.

Laun.

Truly, the more to blame he: we were Christians enough before; e'en as many as could well live one by another. This making of Christians will raise the price of hogs; if we grow all to be pork-eaters, we shall not shortly have a rasher on the coals for money.

Jes.

I'll tell my husband, Launcelot, what you say.

Lor. [*Comes down.*

I shall grow jealous of you shortly, Launcelot, if you thus get my wife into corners.

Jes.

Nay, you need not fear us, Lorenzo. Launcelot and I are out; he tells me flatly there is no mercy for me in heaven, because I am a Jew's daughter.

Lor.

Go in, sirrah! bid them prepare for dinner.

Laun.

That is done, sir: they have all stomachs.

Lor.

Goodly lord, what a wit-snapper are you! Then bid them prepare dinner.

Laun.

That is done too, sir; only cover is the word.

Lor.

Will you cover then, sir?

Laun.

Not so, sir, neither; I know my duty.

Lor.

Yet more quarrelling with occasion? Wilt thou show the whole wealth of thy wit in an instant? I pray thee, understand a plain man in his plain meaning. Go to thy fellows, bid them cover the table, serve in the meat, and we will come in to dinner.

Laun.

For the table, sir, it shall be served in; for the meat, sir, it shall be covered; for your coming in to dinner, sir, why, let it be as humours and conceits shall govern.

[*Exit Launcelot.*

Lor.

The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,
When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
And they did make no noise; in such a night,
Troilus, methinks, mounted the Trojan walls,
And sighed his soul toward the Grecian tents,
Where Cressid lay that night.

Jes.

In such a night
Did Thisbe fearfully o'ertrip the dew,
And saw the lion's shadow ere himself,
And ran dismayed away.

Lor.

In such a night
Stood Dido, with a willow in her hand,
Upon the wild sea-banks, and waft her love
To come again to Carthage.

Jes.

In such a night
Medea gathered the enchanted herbs
That did renew old Æson.

Lor.

In such a night
Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
And with an unthrift love did run from Venice
As far as Belmont.

Jes.

In such a night
Did young Lorenzo swear he loved her well:
Stealing her soul with many vows of faith,
And ne'er a true one.

Lor.

And in such a night
Did pretty Jessica, like a little shrew,
Slander her love, and he forgave her!

Jes.

I would outnight you, did nobody come;
But hark! I hear the footing of a man.

[Enter Balthazar and servants

Lor.

Who comes so fast in silence of the night?

Bal.

A friend.

Lor.

A friend? What friend? Your name, I pray you, friend

Bal.

Balthazar is my name; and I bring word
My mistress will, before the break of day,
Be here at Belmont. She doth stray about
By holy crosses, where she kneels and prays
For happy wedlock hours.

Lor.

But who comes with her?

Bal.

None but a holy hermit and her maid.
I pray you, is my master yet returned?

Lor.

He is not, nor we have not heard from him. —
But go we in, I pray thee, Jessica,
And ceremoniously let us prepare
Some welcome for the mistress of the house.

Laun. [*Without*

Sola, sola, too ha, ho, sola, sola!

Lor.

Who calls? [*Enter Launcelot.*

Laun.

Sola! did you see Master Lorenzo and Mistress Lorenzo? Sola, sola!

Lor.

Leave holloaing, man, here.

Laun.

Sola! Where? where?

Lor.

Here.

Laun.

Tell him there 's a post come from my master, with his horn full of good news: my master will be here ere morning. [*Exit.*

Lor.

Sweet soul, let 's in, and there expect their coming.
And yet no matter; why should we go in?
My friend Balthazar, signify, I pray you,
Within the house, your mistress is at hand;
And bring your music forth into the air.
[*Exit Balthazar*
How sweet the moonlight sleeps upon this bank!
Here will we sit, and let the sounds of music
Creep in our ears. Soft stillness and the night
Become the touches of sweet harmony.
Sit, Jessica. Look how the floor of heaven
Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold!
There 's not the smallest orb which thou beholdest
But in his motion like an angel sings,
Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins.
Such harmony is in immortal souls;
But whilst this muddy vesture of decay
Doth grossly close it in, we cannot hear it.
Come, ho! and wake Diana with a hymn:
With sweetest touches pierce your mistress' ear,
And draw her home with music. [*Music.*

Jes.

I am never merry when I hear music.

Lor.

The reason is, your spirits are attentive.
For do but note a wild and wanton herd,
Or race of youthful and unhandled colts,
Fetching mad bounds, bellowing and neighing loud,
Which is the hot condition of their blood:
If they but hear perchance a trumpet sound,
Or any air of music touch their ears,
You shall perceive them make a mutual stand,
Their savage eyes turn'd to modest gaze
By the sweet power of music.
Therefore the poet
Did feign that Orpheus drew trees, stones, and floods;
Since nought so stockish, hard, and full of rage,
But music for the time doth change his nature.
The man that hath no music in himself,
Nor is not moved with concord of sweet sounds,
Is fit for treasons, stratagems, and spoils;
The motions of his spirit are dull as night,
And his affections dark as Erebus, —
Let no such man be trusted.
Mark the music. [*Enter Portia and Nerissa.*

Por.

That light we see burning in my hall,
How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world.

Ner.

When the moon shone, we did not see the candle.

Por.

So doth the greater glory dim the less:
A substitute shines brightly as the king

Until a king be by; and then his state
Empties itself, as doth an inland brook
Into the main of waters.
Music! hark!

Ner.

It is your music, madam, of the house.

Por.

Nothing is good, I see, without respect:
Methinks it sounds much sweeter than by day.

Ner.

Silence bestows that virtue on it, madame.

Por.

The crow doth sing as sweetly as the lark
When neither is attended; and I think
The nightingale, if she should sing by day,
When every goose is cackling, would be thought
No better a musician than a wren.
How many things by season seasoned are
To their right praise and true perfection!
Peace, ho! the moon sleeps with Endymion,
And would not be awak'd. [*Music ceases*

Lor.

That is the voice, or I am much deceived,
Of Portia.

Por.

He knows me, as the blind man knows the cuckoo,
By the bad voice.

Lor.

Dear lady, welcome home.

Por.

We have been praying for our husbands' welfare,
Which speed, we hope, the better for our words.
Are they returned?

Lor.

Madam, they are not yet;
But there is come a messenger before
To signify their coming.

Por.

Go in, Nerissa:
Give order to my servants that they take
No note at all of our being absent hence;
Nor you, Lorenzo; Jessica, nor you. [*Trumpet.*

Lor.

Your husband is at hand: I hear his trumpet.
We are no tell-tales, madam: fear you not.

Por.

This night, methinks, is but the daylight sick;
It looks a little paler: 't is a day
Such as the day is when the sun is hid.

[*Enter Bassanio, Antonio, Gratiano, and their followers.*

Bass.

We should hold day with the antipodes
If you would walk in absence of the sun.

Por.

Let me give light, but let me not be light;
For a light wife doth make a heavy husband,
And never be Bassanio so for me.
But God sort all! You are welcome home, my lord,

Bass.

I thank you, madam. Give welcome to my friend.
This is the man, this is Antonio,
To whom I am so infinitely bound.

Por.

You should in all sense be much bound to him;
For, as I hear, he was much bound for you.

Ant.

No more than I am well acquitted of.

Por.

Sir, you are very welcome to our house.
It must appear in other ways than words,
Therefore I scant this breathing courtesy.

Gra. [*To Nerissa.*

By yonder moon I swear you do me wrong:
In faith I gave it to the judge's clerk.

Por.

A quarrel, ho, already? What 's the matter?

Gra.

About a hoop of gold, a paltry ring
That she did give to me; whose posy was,
For all the world, like cutler's poetry
Upon a knife, "Love me, and leave me not."

Ner.

What talk you of the posy, or the value?
You swore to me, when I did give it you,
That you would wear it till your hour of death,
And that it should lie with you in your grave,

Though not for me, yet for your vehement oaths
You should have been respective, and have kept it.
Gave it a judge's clerk! but well I know
The clerk will ne'er wear hair on his face
That had it.

Gra.

He will, an if he live to be a man.

Ner.

Ay, if a woman live to be a man.

Gra.

Now, by this hand, I gave it to a youth, —
A kind of boy: a little scrubbed boy
No higher than thyself, the judge's clerk! —
A prating boy, that begged it as a fee;
I could not for my heart deny it him.

Por.

You are to blame, I must be plain with you,
To part so slightly with your wife's first gift, —
A thing stuck on with oaths upon your finger,
And riveted so with faith unto your flesh.
I gave my love a ring, and made him swear
Never to part with it; and here he stands:
I dare be sworn for him, he would not leave it,
Nor pluck it from his finger, for the wealth
That the world masters. Now in faith, Gratiano,
You gave your wife too unkind a cause of grief;
An 't were to me, I should be mad at it.

Bass. [*Aside.*

Why, I were best to cut my left hand off,
And swear I lost the ring defending it.

Gra.

My lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy, his clerk,
That took some pains, he begged mine;
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings.

Por.

What ring gave you, my lord?
Not that, I hope, which you received of me?

Bass.

If I could add a lie unto a fault,
I would deny it; but you see my finger
Hath not a ring upon it, — it is gone.

Por.

Even so void is your false heart of truth.

Bass.

Sweet Portia,
If you did know to whom I gave the ring,
If you did know for whom I gave the ring,
And would conceive for what I gave the ring,
And how unwillingly I left the ring,
When nought would be accepted but the ring,
You would abate the strength of your displeasure.

Por.

If you had known the value of the ring,
Or half her worthiness that gave the ring,
Or your own honour to retain the ring,
You would not then have parted with the ring.
Nerissa teaches me what to believe:
I'll die for 't, but some woman had the ring.

Bass.

No, by mine honour, madam, by my soul,
No woman had it, but a civil doctor,
Even he that had held up the very life
Of my dear friend. What should I say, sweet lady?
I was enforced to send it after him.
I was beset with shame and courtesy:
My honour would not let ingratitude
So much besmear it. Pardon me, good lady,
And by these blessed candles of the night,
Had you been there, I think you would have begged
The ring of me, to give the worthy doctor.

Por.

Let not that doctor e'er come near my house;
Since he hath got the jewel that I loved,
And that which you did swear to keep for me,
I will become as liberal as you:
I'll not deny him anything I have.

Ant.

I am the unhappy subject of these quarrels.

Por.

Sir, grieve not you: you are welcome, notwithstanding.

Bass.

Portia, forgive me this enforcèd wrong;
And, in the hearing of these many friends,
I swear to thee, even by thine fair eyes,
Wherein I see myself, —

Por.

Mark you but that!
In both my eyes he doubly sees himself;
In each eye, one. Swear by your double self,
And there 's an oath of credit.

Bass.

Nay, but hear me.
Pardon this fault, and by my soul I swear
I never more will break an oath with thee.

Ant.

I once did lend my body for his wealth,
Which but for him that had your husband's ring
Had quite miscarried: I dare be bound again.
My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
Will never more break faith advisedly.

Por.

Then you shall be his surety: give him this,
And bid him keep it better than the other.

Ant.

Here, Lord Bassanio: swear to keep this ring.

Bass. [*Amazed.*

By heaven! it is the same I gave the doctor!

Por.

You are all amazed.
Here is a letter, read it at your leisure;
It comes from Padua, from Bellario:
There you shall find that Portia was the doctor,
Nerissa, there, her clerk. Unseal this letter soon;
There you shall find three of your argosies
Are richly come to harbour suddenly.

Bass.

Were you the doctor, and I knew you not?

Gra.

Were you the clerk, and I knew you not?

Por.

It is almost morning,
And yet, I am sure, you are not satisfied
Of these events at full: let us go in;
And charge us there upon inter'gatories
And we will answer all things faithfully.

CURTAIN.

Prize Winning Plays

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YESTERDAY'S ROSES. A Romantic Play in Three Acts, by LIDA LARRIMORE. Four males, five females. Time, two hours and a half. Letty Hollis is engaged to marry Ben Darrell, but the illness of her father compels her to postpone the wedding. Ben sails away on a ship bound for South America. Eighteen years pass. Ben returns. Both Ben and Letty are determined to keep the promise made eighteen years ago. Ben falls in love with June, Letty's niece. Letty is convinced that June and Ben love each other and follows the only course which will free him without destroying his sense of honor. On the day appointed for her marriage to Ben she elopes with Mark Tibbetts, who has loved her since she was a girl. Ben persuades June that Letty will be happy with Mark and together they plan the trip to South America. Royalty $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

ZEE-ZEE. A Comedy in Three Acts, by ANNE MURRAY. Three males, 7 females. Time, two hours and a half. Zerelda Starr, who at the age of 18 had run away with a circus clown, comes back after many years to her childhood home. She finds there—as the last of her family—two nieces. Zeralda is touched with pity for their narrow, colorless lives, and she sets about to change conditions for them. The crisis comes when Lael falls in love with a young man who has appeared on the scene somewhat mysteriously and who is discovered to be a friend of Zeralda's. Character and fate take a hand in working out the problem and in bringing about a satisfactory conclusion. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

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THE WEAKEST LINK. A Drama in Three Acts, by CARTY RANCK. Four males, three females. Time, two hours and a half. Mrs. Mollie Wayne, mayor of Haddington, a Western city, is fighting for municipal reform. She is strongly opposed to the granting of a new franchise to the Power Company, and its president, Richard Marvin, is fighting the mayor with all the weapons at his disposal. Mayor Wayne's son is in love with Marvin's daughter. An interesting situation develops when Mayor Wayne learns, in her moment of victory against the Power Company, that her son has accepted a bribe from Marvin. To press her victory means to ruin her only son; not to do so means disloyalty to the taxpayers who have elected her to office. A tensely dramatic situation develops. Royalty $10.00. Price 50 cents.

THE LEFT OVERS. A comedy in Three Acts, by HELEN BAGG. Four males, six females. Time, two hours and a half. The plot centers about the unexpected return of Henry Stone, traveler and scientist, to his household. Carlotta and Jane, the daughters, are in love with Moseley Betts and Ripley Sears, who, knowing that the girls' father thinks "the world's gone to pot since the War, and that all the men under forty are lounge lizards," plan to convince him of their energy and daring by staging a hold-up and robbing him of a valuable antique which he has brought home. A lady detective adds to the complications. Royalty, $10.00. Price, 50 cents.

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